

# EX-POW BULLETIN

the official voice of the  
American Ex-Prisoners of War

501(c)3 Veterans Service Organization

Volume 79

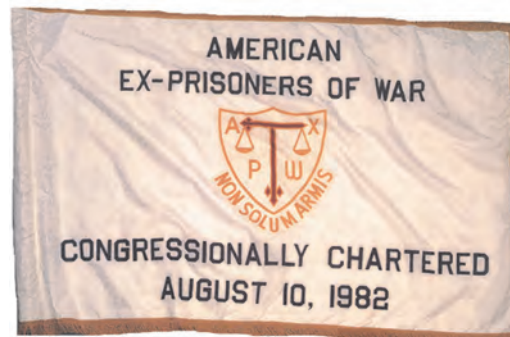
[www.axpow.org](http://www.axpow.org)

Number 7/8/9

July~August~September 2022



*We exist to help those who cannot help themselves*



*AXPOW Congressional Charter*

# MISSING MAN TABLE AND HONORS CEREMONY



As you entered the room, you may have noticed a special table; it is reserved to honor our missing men.

Set for six, the empty chairs represent Americans who were or are missing from each of the services – Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, and Coast Guard – and civilians, all with us in spirit.

Some here were very young, or not yet born, when the Vietnam War began; however, all Americans should never forget the brave men and women who answered our nation's call and served the cause of freedom in a special way.

Let me explain the meaning of this table, and then join me for a moment of silent prayer.

The table is round – to show our everlasting concern.

The cloth is white – symbolizing the purity of their motives when answering the call to serve.

The single red rose reminds us of the lives of these Americans....and their loved ones and friends who keep the faith, while seeking answers.

The yellow ribbon symbolizes our continued uncertainty, hope for their return and determination to account for them.

A slice of lemon reminds us of their bitter fate, captured or missing in a foreign land.

A pinch of salt symbolizes the tears of our missing and their families.

The lighted candle reflects our hope for their return.

The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain us and those lost from our country, founded as one nation under God.

The glass is inverted – to symbolize their inability to share a toast.

The chairs are/chair is empty – they are missing..... (moment of silence)

Let us now raise our water glasses in a toast to honor America's POW/MIAs, to the success of our efforts to account for them, and to the safety of all now serving our nation!

## table of contents

Officers/Directors	4
National Commander	5
CEO	6
Medsearch	7
Legislative	12
Andersonville	13
NamPOW	15
POW/MIA	22
Civilian	24
Allies in Healing	27
Application	29
Contributions	30
Taps/Chaplain	31
Voluntary Funding	34

### Publisher

PNC Milton M Moore Jr  
2965 Sierra Bermeja  
Sierra Vista, AZ 85650  
(520) 249-7122  
tombstone490@gmail.com

### Editor

Cheryl Cerbone  
23 Cove View Drive  
South Yarmouth, MA 02664  
(508) 394-5250  
axpoweditor@comcast.net

Deadline for the Oct-Dec 2022  
Bulletin is August 31, 2022  
Please send all materials to the  
editor at the above address.

## July-September, 2022



From the day when North Koreans attacked South Korea on June 25, 1950 to the day of the armistice on July 27, 1953, the events of

the Korean War revealed the mass destruction, pain, and suffering Koreans had to endure. At the end of the war, more than 3 million Koreans died while millions of refugees remained homeless and distraught.

About 1 million Chinese died in this battle and American casualties numbered 54,246 people.

Operation Big Switch began on August 5, 1953. It was the final exchange of prisoners of war by both sides.

By December, 1953 the figures for repatriated POWs stood at 77,000 Communists for 12,700 UN men, of whom 3,597 were Americans.

On August 10, 1982, The American Ex-Prisoners of War received its Federal Charter.

*PHOTO-Inside Cover: Recognition Ceremony – Airmen participated in an annual recognition ceremony at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany for prisoners of war and missing in action service members. Photo by AF Airman 1st Class Valerie Seelye.*

EX-POW Bulletin (ISSN 0161-7451) is published quarterly (four times annually) by the American Ex-Prisoners of War, PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445. Periodical postage paid at Arlington, TX and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: send address changes to EX-POW Bulletin, AXPOW Headquarters, PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445. Founded April 14, 1942, in Albuquerque, NM, then known as Bataan Relief Organization, Washington State non-profit corporation, "American Ex-Prisoners of War", October 11, 1949, recorded as Document No. 133762, Roll 1, Page 386-392. NONPROFIT CORPORATION. Nationally Chartered August 10, 1982. Appearance in this publication does not constitute endorsement by the American Ex-Prisoners of War of the product or service advertised. The publisher reserves the right to decline or discontinue any such advertisement.

© 2022 American Ex-Prisoners of War



# axpow board of directors

National Headquarters  
PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445  
(817) 649-2979 HQ@axpow.org

---

National Commander ~ Robert Certain  
5100 John D Ryan Blvd, Apt 1801, San Antonio, TX 78245  
(770) 639-3313 [rgcertain@icloud.com](mailto:rgcertain@icloud.com)

## operations

### Chief Executive Officer

Cheryl Cerbone  
23 Cove View Drive  
South Yarmouth, MA 02664  
(508)394-5250 - Home  
(508) 360-4090 - Cell  
[axpoweditor@comcast.net](mailto:axpoweditor@comcast.net)

### Chief Operations Officer

Clydie J Morgan  
PO Box 3445  
Arlington TX 76007-3445  
(817) 300-2840 - Cell  
[hq@axpow.org](mailto:hq@axpow.org)

### Chief Financial Officer

Marsha M Coke  
2710 Charon Court  
Grand Prairie TX 75052  
(817) 649-2979 – Office  
(817) 723-3996 – Cell  
[axpow76010@yahoo.com](mailto:axpow76010@yahoo.com)

## board of directors

Fred Boyles  
Athens GA 30606  
912/674-5847 (cell)  
[fredboyles@bellsouth.net](mailto:fredboyles@bellsouth.net)

Edward "Ted" Cadwallader  
Elk Grove, CA  
(916) 685-5369  
[DCadwall@aol.com](mailto:DCadwall@aol.com)

David Eberly  
Williamsburg, VA  
(757) 508-8453  
[eberlydsl@verizon.net](mailto:eberlydsl@verizon.net)

Pam Warner Eslinger  
Hammon, OK  
(580) 821-1526  
[eslingerpam@gmail.com](mailto:eslingerpam@gmail.com)

Alan Marsh  
Lizella, GA  
(478) 951-9247  
[alanmarsh@bellsouth.net](mailto:alanmarsh@bellsouth.net)

Milton 'Skip' Moore  
Sierra Vista, AZ  
(520) 249-7122  
[tombstone490@gmail.com](mailto:tombstone490@gmail.com)

Sally Morgan  
Grand Prairie, TX  
(972) 896-7252  
[sbmorgan@aol.com](mailto:sbmorgan@aol.com)

Jim 'Moe' Moyer  
Lake Wales, FL  
(407) 448-1181  
[moehog@verizon.net](mailto:moehog@verizon.net)

Mary Schantag  
Branson, MO  
(417) 336-4232  
[info@pownetwork.org](mailto:info@pownetwork.org)

Charles A. Susino  
Lebanon, NJ  
(732)221-0073  
[charles.susino@gmail.com](mailto:charles.susino@gmail.com)

Jan Williams  
Guthrie, OK  
(580) 821-2376  
[williamsjj72@ymail.com](mailto:williamsjj72@ymail.com)

# national commander



Robert G. Certain  
5100 John D Ryan Blvd,  
Apt 1801  
San Antonio, TX 78245  
(770) 639-3313  
[rgcertain@icloud.com](mailto:rgcertain@icloud.com)

## HISTORY IS NUTRITIOUS

When a soldier dies, a library is lost. All of us who have served in

uniform, especially those of us who incarcerated by the enemy in past wars, have a lot of important history in our stories. We lived and survived through very difficult times and experienced in a few short months or years more than some of our contemporaries will ever experience in a lifetime. For that reason, I encourage all former prisoners of war to contact the Library of Congress about their Veterans History Project to arrange an interview to tell your story. You can go online to <https://www.loc.gov/vets/> or call (202) 707-4916.

I gave my interview several years ago and have done other things to preserve my own history. I wrote an autobiography in 2000 (Unchained Eagle) and am adding to it now. I was recently featured in a short film produced by "Old Guys and Their Airplanes", also titled "Unchained Eagle." That video has won several awards and is available on YouTube at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=029rKjT\\_VTs&t=86s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=029rKjT_VTs&t=86s)

And next February, as we Vietnam POWs observe the 50th anniversary of our freedom from the prisons of North Vietnam, I will lead a small group to Vietnam and Cambodia with a cruise up the Mekong River and a flight into Hanoi. The group will include former POWs, family and friends, and other Vietnam veterans. When I wrote this article, there were three cabins remaining. Interested parties can check at this web address to determine if any are still available: <https://brennco.com/MOAAVACATIONS/vietnam/>

My reason for arranging this trip was to "connect the dots" from our long struggle in Southeast Asia to the present day – 50 years of important personal and world history. Whether our memories and actions are good or bad, we can learn a lot by reviewing them. As future generations study our stories, they might be able to avoid the mistakes we made and build on our successes.

*Commander Certain*



Happy Anniversary Commander & Robbie!! Hawaii looks beautiful!





## from the CEO

Cheryl Cerbone  
23 Cove View Drive  
South Yarmouth, MA 02664  
(508)394-5250 - Home

axpowceo@comcast.net

July 4th kicks off the "SEASON" here on Cape Cod. The waters are warmer; our unofficial trademark – the shark – looks to a banner summer's dining on our unofficial mammal – the seal.



Every year, the suggestions to curb the shark population range from moving the seals to another island...to corralling the sharks...to hosting "Jaws" parties on the beach. Healthy respect for our waters has always been the best answer, so I spend my time on the beach walking or reading. The rest in my gardens. I hope wherever in this beautiful country you are, you are doing what you love most in the summer. And for the 4th of July, if your town has ceremonies, try to take part in them. Our freedom did not come lightly as you can all attest to.

July is also a little bittersweet in the last few years. Our National Conventions came to an end after more than 70 years. As our membership has dwindled, so did attendance and we made the hard decision to end them. I always looked forward to July and the opportunity to see old friends – both mine and my parents. It makes me miss them more.

In September, AXPOW is having our board meeting in Americus, Georgia – right by Andersonville. We meet on Thursday, then have a nice social time with the Friends of

AXPOW BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
ANDERSONVILLE, GEORGIA  
SEPTEMBER 18, 2022

The board will arrive on Wednesday, Sept. 17 and depart Saturday, Sept. 20.  
We will be participating in POW/MIA Recognition Day ceremonies on Sept. 19 and meeting with the Friends of Andersonville as we continue our transition as voted on by our membership. If you have any ideas for the future of AXPOW, please send them to me at:  
axpowceo@comcast.net. Cheryl

Andersonville Thursday night. Friday, we'll attend ceremonies at Andersonville National Historic Site and take time out to visit the National POW Museum – our legacy and our focus for the future.

At this meeting, we will be making more decisions as we continue our transition. If any of you have any suggestions for AXPOW and what you see as our next steps, please let any of us know. Names and information are on page 4 of each issue of the Bulletin. This has always been YOUR organization.

One of our members recently commented that we need to be looking at a firm date for completing our tasks; he said he didn't want to see a slow fade-away with one or two lone POWs being helped to a dais and nodding. Hard as it feels, I agree with him.

Butwhen? We are down to fewer than 5,000 in our organization – including Next of Kin. The VA puts the figure of former POWs at fewer than 1,000.

That's both a good and bad thing. Good in that we are not getting more POWs; bad in that our POWs are aging out. WWII ended 77 years ago...Korea 69 years ago...Vietnam will have its 50th homecoming anniversary next year. Iraq 1 and 2 POWs also came home decades ago.

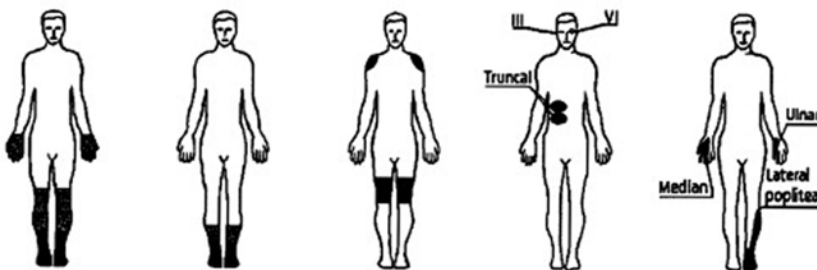
We don't have answers yet to our future; we'll be working through options for the next few years. I love this organization – most of my life has been spent in it. And I want to honor my dad – and all the dads and moms out there – the best way I can.

God Bless you all and God Bless America.

Fondly

*Cheryl*

## Peripheral Neuropathy



Large fiber Neuropathy	Small fiber Neuropathy	Proximal motor Neuropathy	Acute mono Neuropathies	Pressure Palsies
Sensory loss: 0 → +++ (Touch, vibration) Pain: + → +++ Tendon reflex: N → ↓↓↓ Motor deficit 0 → +++	Sensory loss: 0 → + (thermal, allodynia) Pain: + → +++ Tendon reflex: N → ↓ Motor deficit: 0	Sensory loss: 0 → + Pain: + → +++ Tendon reflex: ↓↓ Proximal Motor deficit: + → +++	Sensory loss: 0 → + Pain: + → +++ Tendon reflex: N Motor deficit: + → +++	Sensory loss in Nerve distribution: + → +++ Pain: + → ++ Tendon reflex: N Motor deficit: + → +++

Every now and then we focus on one or more of the presumptives for former prisoners of war. This month, our article is on peripheral neuropathy. Sources: NIH and the Mayo Clinic.

Peripheral neuropathy is a term used to describe disorders of your peripheral nervous system. Your peripheral nervous system includes nerves in your face, arms, legs, torso, and some cranial nerves. In fact, all of your nerves not located in your central nervous system — which includes the brain and the spinal cord — are peripheral nerves.

Neuropathies may affect just one nerve (mononeuropathy) or several nerves (polyneuropathy). Your nerves provide communication between your brain and your muscles, skin, internal organs and blood vessels.

When damaged, your nerves can't communicate properly, and that miscommunication causes symptoms such as pain or numbness.

Peripheral neuropathy often affects people with diabetes and autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and lupus. Certain vitamin deficiencies, some medications and alcoholism can also damage peripheral nerves.

Treating the underlying condition may relieve some cases of peripheral neuropathy. In other cases, treatment may focus on managing pain. Peripheral nerves have a remarkable ability to regenerate themselves, and new treatments using nerve growth factors or gene therapy may offer even better chances for recovery in the future.

## Signs and Symptoms

Neurologic symptoms may occur related to your central nervous system, which consists of your brain and spinal cord, or your peripheral nervous system, which links your spinal cord and brain to all other parts of your body. The extensive network of peripheral nerves helps your muscles contract (motor nerves) and allows you to feel a range of sensations (sensory nerves). In addition, your peripheral nerves help control some of the involuntary functions of the autonomic nervous system, which regulates your internal organs, sweat glands and blood pressure.

Unfortunately, peripheral nerves are fragile and easily damaged. Damage to a peripheral nerve can interfere with the communication between the area it serves and



## medsearch, cont'd...

your brain, affecting your ability to move certain muscles or feel normal sensations. Your symptoms will depend on the cause of your neuropathy and on which nerve or nerves are involved.

If a sensory nerve is damaged, you're likely to experience symptoms that may include:

- Pain
- Numbness
- Tingling
- Burning
- Loss of feeling

These symptoms often begin gradually. You may have a tingling sensation or numbness that starts in your toes or the balls of your feet and spreads upward. Tingling might also begin in your hands and extend up your arms. In some cases your skin may become so sensitive that the slightest touch is agonizing. You may also have numbness, or even a complete lack of feeling, in your hands or feet.

At times your symptoms may be barely noticeable, and some people go years without realizing anything is wrong. For others, symptoms are constant, and especially at night may be almost unbearable. Signs and symptoms may include:

- The sensation that you're wearing an invisible glove or sock
- Burning pain
- Sharp, jabbing or electric-like pain
- Extreme sensitivity to touch, even light touch
- Lack of coordination

If your motor nerves are affected, you may have weakness or paralysis of the muscles controlled by those nerves. And if you have damage to nerves that

control certain functions of the autonomic nervous system, you might have bowel or bladder problems, reduced sweating or impotence. You might also experience a sharp fall in your blood pressure when you stand up, which may cause you to faint or feel lightheaded.

## Causes

A number of factors can cause neuropathies. When a single nerve is affected, the most likely cause is trauma or some type of repetitive use that puts pressure on the nerve. Nerve pressure can result from using a cast or crutches, spending a long time in an unnatural position — such as typing at a computer keyboard — or having a tumor or abnormal bone growth.

When damage occurs to several nerves, the cause is frequently diabetes. About half of all people with diabetes develop some type of neuropathy. Other common causes include alcoholism, HIV/AIDS, inherited disorders and a deficiency of certain vitamins, especially B vitamins.

Autoimmune diseases, including lupus and rheumatoid arthritis, kidney disease, liver disease and an underactive thyroid (hypothyroidism) also can damage peripheral nerves. So can exposure to poisons, some toxic substances and certain medications — especially those used to treat cancer. You may even inherit a tendency to develop peripheral neuropathy.

Sometimes bacterial or viral infections may cause neuropathy. An acute condition called Guillain-Barre syndrome frequently causes severe damage to all or part of your peripheral nerves by destroying the myelin sheath that covers nerve fibers. The myelin sheath acts as an insulator for your nerves and helps conduct nerve impulses. Although the exact cause of Guillain-Barre syndrome isn't known, approximately two-thirds of cases occur after an infection, surgery or immunization.

## Risk Factors

Having diabetes places you at high risk of developing peripheral nerve damage. In fact, about half of people with diabetes have some form of neuropathy. The risk increases the longer you have diabetes, and is highest for those who've had the disease for more than 25 years. Your risk is even greater if you are older than 40 or have difficulty controlling your blood sugar level.

Although researchers don't understand exactly how damage occurs, a high blood sugar level seems to impair your nerves' ability to transmit signals. You can help reduce your risk by carefully following a medically approved plan for keeping your blood sugar level as close to normal as possible.

Your risk of developing peripheral neuropathy is also higher if you have one or more of the following risk factors:

Alcohol abuse. Excessive drinking of alcohol can affect your nervous system, causing numbness of your hands and feet.



## medsearch, cont'd...

**Vitamin deficiency.** A lack of certain vitamins, especially B-1 (thiamin) and B-12. Pernicious anemia, which occurs when your body can't absorb B-12 properly, often leads to peripheral neuropathy. **Autoimmune diseases.** You're more likely to develop peripheral neuropathy if you have an autoimmune disease such as lupus or rheumatoid arthritis, or if your immune system is compromised by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or AIDS.

**Other health problems.** Medical conditions including certain types of cancer, kidney and liver disease, also can put you at risk for nerve damage.

**Repetitive stress.** A job or hobby that puts stress on one nerve for long periods of time increases your chances of developing peripheral neuropathy.

In carpal tunnel syndrome, for example, the median nerve that extends through your wrist into your fingers becomes compressed. Repetitive assembly line work or work involving prolonged, heavy gripping can compress the median nerve. Playing golf, tennis or a musical instrument and using vibrating power tools or even crutches also can put pressure on peripheral nerves.

**Toxic substances.** Exposure to some toxic substances can make you susceptible to peripheral nerve damage. These substances include heavy metals, such as lead, mercury and arsenic; organic solvents; carbon monoxide and certain medications, such as those used to treat cancer or AIDS.

### When to seek medical advice

See your doctor regularly if you have diabetes, a compromised immune system or any other chronic medical condition.

If you have a cut or sore on your foot that doesn't seem to be healing, is infected or is getting worse, see your doctor promptly, especially if you have diabetes. Even minor sores that don't heal can turn into ulcers. In the most severe cases, untreated foot ulcers may become gangrenous — a condition in which the tissue dies — and require surgery or even amputation of your foot.

Seek medical care right away if you notice any unusual tingling, weakness or pain in your hands or feet. Early diagnosis and treatment offer the best chance for controlling your symptoms and preventing further damage to your peripheral nerves. If your symptoms are interfering with your

sleep or you feel depressed, your doctor may be able to suggest treatments that can help.

### Screening and Diagnosis

Peripheral neuropathy isn't a single disease, but rather a syndrome with many causes. For that reason it can be difficult to diagnose. To help in the diagnosis, your doctor will likely take a full medical history and perform a physical and neurologic exam that may include checking your tendon reflexes, your muscle strength and tone, your ability to feel certain sensations, and your posture and coordination.

Your doctor also may request blood tests to check your level of vitamin B-12, a urinalysis, thyroid function tests and, often, electromyography (EMG) — a test that measures the electrical discharges produced in your muscles. As a part of this test you'll be asked to have a nerve conduction study, which measures how quickly your nerves carry electrical signals. A nerve conduction study is often used to diagnose carpal tunnel syndrome and other peripheral nerve disorders.

Your doctor may recommend a nerve biopsy, a procedure in which a small portion of a nerve is removed and examined for abnormalities. But even a nerve biopsy may not always reveal what's damaging your nerves.

### Complications

Diabetic neuropathy may cause a number of complications. Damage to the nerves in your feet, along with poor circulation, can lead to ulcers and even gangrene. But it's not only your feet that are vulnerable — diabetes-related neuropathy can affect any organ in your body.

If nerves related to digestion are damaged, for instance, your stomach may empty too slowly, which may cause constant nausea, vomiting and bloating. Or you may have frequent constipation or diarrhea. In some cases you may have problems with bladder control or impotence.

Other complications include:

- Partial or complete loss of movement or sensation
- Ulcers
- Relationship problems due to impotence
- Depression
- Weight loss
- Difficulty breathing or swallowing

## medsearch, cont'd...

### Treatment

The goal of treatment is to manage the underlying condition causing your neuropathy and to repair damage, as well as provide symptom relief. If your doctor hasn't been able to determine the cause of your neuropathy, he or she may try a variety of medications to see which help ease your symptoms.

Controlling a chronic condition may not eliminate your neuropathy, but it can play a key role in managing it. Here's what your doctor may recommend for treating various underlying conditions:

**Diabetes.** If you have diabetes, you and your doctor can work together to keep your blood sugar level as close to normal as possible. Maintaining normal blood sugar levels helps protect your nerves.

**Vitamin deficiency.** If your neuropathy is the result of a vitamin deficiency, it's likely your symptoms will improve once the deficiency is corrected. Your doctor may recommend injections of vitamin B-12 daily for a few days, then once a month. If you have pernicious anemia, you'll need regular injections for the rest of your life, and possibly additional vitamin supplements. You'll also need to eat a healthy diet.

**Autoimmune disorder.** If your neuropathy is caused by an inflammatory or autoimmune process, treatment will be aimed at modulating your immune response.

**Nerve pressure.** In cases where neuropathy is the result of pressure on a nerve, treatment will likely focus first on eliminating the source of the pressure. That might mean adding ergonomic chairs, desks or keyboards to your home or office, changing the way you hold tools or instruments, or taking a break from certain hobbies or sports. In some cases of nerve compression, you may need surgery to correct the problem.

**Toxic substances or medications.** If toxins or medications are responsible for the neuropathy, it's critical that you stop taking the medication or avoid further exposure to the toxin to prevent the neuropathy from progressing further.

Research aimed at finding more effective treatments for peripheral neuropathy is ongoing. For example, researchers are looking at developing

nerve growth factors to reproduce the chemicals that signal your body to repair small nerve fibers. Other scientists are studying the use of the antioxidant alpha lipoic acid (thioctic acid) to treat diabetic neuropathy. Unfortunately, no medications can repair nerve damage yet, but the body can regenerate nerves if the offending substance is removed.

### Therapies

Several drug-free therapies and techniques may also help with pain relief. Doctors frequently use them in conjunction with medications, but some may be effective on their own. They include:

**Transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation (TENS).** Your doctor may prescribe this therapy, which may help prevent pain signals from reaching your brain. TENS delivers tiny electrical impulses to specific nerve pathways through small electrodes placed on your skin.

**Biofeedback.** This therapy uses a special machine to teach you how to control certain body responses that reduce pain. You then learn how to control these same responses yourself.

**Acupuncture.** The National Institutes of Health have found that acupuncture can be an effective treatment for chronic pain, possibly including the pain of neuropathy.

**Hypnosis.** Many adults can be hypnotized by a trained professional, but for hypnosis to be most effective, you also have to be a willing and motivated participant.

**Relaxation techniques.** Designed to help reduce the muscle tension that makes pain worse, relaxation techniques range from deep-breathing exercises to visualization (imagining yourself floating in a tropical ocean, for example), yoga and meditation. You might want to take classes in one or more of these techniques, or you can learn them yourself using books or tapes.

Talk to a counselor or therapist. Insomnia, depression and impotence are possible complications of peripheral neuropathy. There are treatments that can help.

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

9000 Rockville Pike

Bethesda, MD, 20814

# PRESUMPTIVE SERVICE CONNECTED DISABILITIES

Public Law 97-37

by William Paul Skelton, III, MD F.A.C.P.

All ex-POWs should keep these. Whenever you open your claim, take them with you and make sure the adjudication officer sees them and have him read them! Make sure he knows all about them. Tell him your own story as it relates to your problem.....

## 1. ARTHRITIS, TRAUMATIC

Also known as articular trauma.

## 2. AVITAMINOSIS

The total lack of vitamins in the diet.

## 3. BERIBERI

Caused by a severe lack of vitamin B1 (thiamine) in the diet.

## 4. DYSENTERY, CHRONIC

A disease characterized by frequent and watery stools, usually with blood and mucus, and accompanied by rectal and abdominal pain, fever, and dehydration.

## 5. FROSTBITE

The actual freezing of tissue.

## 6. HELMINTHIASIS

Infection with any type of worms that parasitize the human.

## 7. MALNUTRITION

Merely means bad nutrition.

## 8. PELLAGRA

It is caused by a virtual lack of vitamin B3 (niacin) in the diet.

## 9. ANY OTHER NUTRITIONAL DEFICIENCY

The lack of protein and calories in the diet generally produces no lasting side effects.

## 10. PSYCHOSIS

A generic term for any of the insanities.

## 11. PANIC DISORDER

Characterized by discrete periods of apprehension or fear.

## 12. GENERALIZED ANXIETY DISORDER

## 13. OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER

This may be either obsessions or compulsions.

## 14. POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

The re-experiencing of a trauma of a past recognized stress or that can produce symptoms of distress.

## 15. ATYPICAL ANXIETY DISORDER

This is a category that is used for diagnosis when the affected individual appears to have an anxiety disorder that does not meet the criteria for entry into any of the other known anxiety disorders.

## 16. DEPRESSIVE NEUROSIS /DYSTHYMIC DISORDER

Characterized by depressive periods in which the patient feels sad and/or down and has a loss of interest in the usual activities that cause pleasure or involvement in usual pastimes.

## 17. PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHY

Literally Greek for the suffering of nerves outside of the brain and spinal cord.

## 18. IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a common disorder of the intestines that leads to crampy pain, gas, bloating, and changes in bowel habits.

## 19. PEPTIC ULCER DISEASE

A peptic ulcer is a sore or hole in the lining of the stomach or

duodenum (the first part of the small intestine).

## 20. CIRRHOSIS

Scar tissue replaces normal, healthy tissue, blocking the flow of blood through the organ and preventing it from working as it should.

## 21. STROKE & COMPLICATIONS

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to part of the brain is suddenly interrupted or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts, spilling blood into the spaces surrounding brain cells.

## 22. HEART & COMPLICATIONS

Heart disease includes atherosclerotic heart disease, and hypertensive vascular disease (including hypertensive heart disease, and hypertension).

## 23. OSTEOPOROSIS

Osteoporosis is a disease in which bones become fragile and more likely to break.

Disability compensation is a monetary benefit paid to Veterans who are determined by VA to be disabled by an injury or illness that was incurred or aggravated during active military service. These disabilities are considered to be service connected.

To be eligible for compensation, the Veteran must have been separated or discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

Monthly disability compensation varies with the degree of disability and the number of eligible dependents. Veterans with certain severe disabilities may be eligible for additional special monthly compensation (SMC). Disability compensation benefits are not subject to federal or state income tax.

# legislative



Legislative officer  
Charles A Susino

As another Memorial Day has passed, I hope each and every one of our veterans received all they deserve.

Life moves so quickly yet the speed of Congress to address the basic unquestionable needs of our veterans take so long, much too long, many decades long. One example, all of society has known for more than a generation the toxic exposures our veterans have experienced and the resulting suffering, yet we continue to ask, plead, and demand Congress to enact the laws so our veterans' suffering is treated both medically and financially. I am here to report that "progress" continues and this article will outline the most recent advancements in Congress.

Timeliness is important and when acknowledgement and appropriate response takes so long, too many veterans have died before any of this comes to pass. How sad. How pitiful. Past National Commanders have said to all of us many times to communicate and act while the veteran is there so they know they are appreciated for who they are as an individual and how they served our nation. The latter being the veterans benefits they painfully earned. Unfortunately, Congress hasn't followed the same philosophy.

Most recently, the House has passed a group of Veterans' Bills onto the Senate for action. True of all proposed legislation, bills having varied probabilities of becoming laws. In summary:

Most notably as referenced above, Bill HR 3967: Honoring our PACT Act of 2021 directly addresses the health and benefits of the veterans regarding toxic exposure. It would provide a list of presumptive conditions associated with burn pits and establish a permanent presumptive framework to address any toxic exposure, foreign or domestic, past, present, and future. The scope would help Post-9/11 veterans, Persian Gulf War veterans, K2 veterans, Atomic veterans, and Vietnam veterans, including those who served in Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. Fortunately, this Bill has a reasonably high probability of becoming law but its chances of passage are improved if our members and their families contact Senators.

Other proposed bills included in this package from the House are:

1. H.R. 5754 – Patient Advocate Tracker Act- veterans to electronically submit complaints about the delivery of health care services
2. H.R. 7153 – VA Principles of Benefits Automation Act- modernize the information technology systems of the VA
3. H.R. 6604 – Veterans Eligibility to Transfer School (VETS) Credit Act
4. H.R. 6064 – To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to seek to enter into an agreement with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine for a review of examinations, furnished by the Secretary, to individuals who submit claims to the Secretary for compensation under chapter 11 of title 38, United States Code, for mental and physical conditions

linked to military sexual trauma (moderate chance of passage)

5. H.R. 6052 – VA OIG Training Act- training VA employees on reporting wrong doing
6. H.R. 7375 – To direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to update the payment system of the Department of Veterans Affairs to allow for electronic fund transfer of educational assistance, administered by the Secretary, to a foreign institution of higher education
7. HR 6962- to improve hearings before the Board of Veterans' Appeals regarding claims involving military sexual trauma (MST).
8. H.R. 6376 – Student Veteran Work Study Modernization Act- to extend eligibility for a certain work-study allowance paid by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to certain individuals who pursue programs of rehabilitation, education, or training on at least a half-time basis, and for other purposes.
9. H.R. 5738 – Lactation Spaces for Veteran Moms Act, as amended
10. H.R. 7335 – to allow for electronic fund transfer of educational assistance, administered by the Secretary, to a foreign institution of higher education
11. H.R. 6961 – Dignity for MST Survivors Act, as amended-to improve hearings before the Board of Veterans' Appeals regarding claims involving military sexual trauma.
12. H.R. 2724 – VA Peer Support Enhancement for MST Survivors Act- to provide for peer support specialists for claimants who are survivors of military sexual trauma.

CAS

# andersonville



Andersonville NHS  
496 Cemetery Road  
Andersonville, GA 31711  
(229) 924-0343  
Gia Wagner, Superintendent  
Gia\_Wagner@nps.gov

Greetings from Andersonville  
National Historic Site!



We just completed our Memorial Day commemorative events, and it was wonderful to see so many faces come to remember and honor our fallen service members with us. We have a new volunteer group assisting park staff with the Avenue of Flags event. On Friday, May 20, Rolling Thunder, Chapter 3 from Warner Robbins helped get the job done in record time. On Saturday, May 28, 243 volunteers came to place the flags on each service member's headstone in the National Cemetery. The ceremony on Sunday was attended by many from the community and was highlighted by music played by the US Army Maneuver Center of Excellence Band with speeches from AXPOW board member Fred Boyles, Congressman Sanford Bishop, and retired US Air Force Lt. Col. James Wolfe, as well as the customary laying of wreaths.

The staff and I are working hard on several exciting projects. There has been a recognition across the National Park Service that the 14 national cemeteries in our care need rehabilitation and restoration work in almost every area: turf, tree and shrub plantings, wall repairs, and monument and headstone restoration. A group of experts from across the country are coming the Andersonville National Cemetery the week after Memorial Day to inspect and offer treatment plans for projects to occur in 2023 should the proposed federal budget be passed.

The other cemetery project that is moving forward is the re-contouring of Section Q. The US Army Corps of Engineers is conducting geotechnical surveys of this section in June. We are hoping to secure funding for the dirt work in 2023 or 2024 so we can open this large section for burials. The headquarters building (Cemetery Lodge) will get new exterior paint, and the maintenance sheds will be re-roofed.

Museum projects this year are the design work for replacement of the museum doors, restrooms, and HVAC system. We are also working on the design for repairs to the museum water feature which has not been operational for the past year. Sadly, we have had a request to return the bone ship exhibit to the US Navy Museum in Annapolis. Park staff are working on finding a replacement for this important museum piece.

We were fortunate to receive funding for two internships this year. The first is "The Women Who Saved Andersonville" was funded by a grant through the National Park Foundation and the Friends of Andersonville. The internship has been filled by Andrew Bellecomo (Georgia Southwestern University) who will be working through the American Conservation Experience youth program for collecting new primary documentation that highlights the vital contributions of key women who were at the forefront of preserving Andersonville NHS. Mr. Bellecomo will be visiting the Georgia Archives and the Grand Army of the Republic Museum in Springfield, Illinois to collect new information that will be included in the park archives for park staff and researchers to utilize in the future. Mr. Bellecomo will consult with park staff in creating new interpretive and educational programming that utilizes this information.

## andersonville, cont'd...

The second is the "25th Anniversary of the National Prisoner of War Museum Internship". Bobby Brooks (Georgia Southwestern University) has been selected for this 45-week internship. The NPS Youth program funded this internship through the American Conservation Experience (ACE) program. Mr. Brooks will be training in museum operations, greeting visitors, giving an introductory orientation to Andersonville NHS and the National Prisoner of War Museum, conducting interpretive programming in the park, and

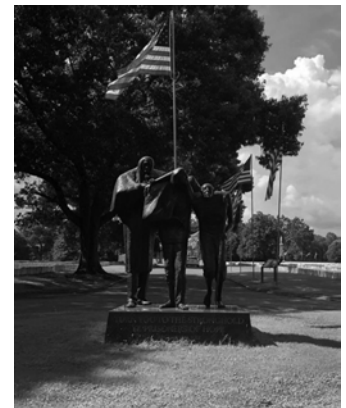
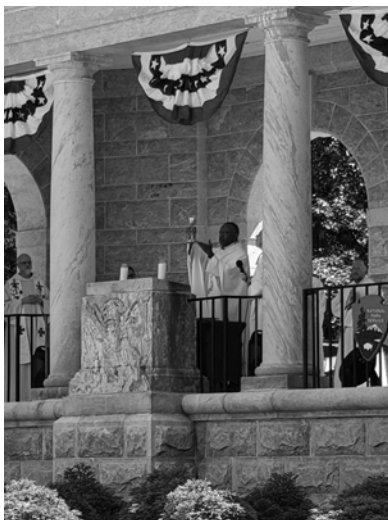
finding opportunities to connect visitors from far and wide to the American POW story. Mr. Brooks will also be a vital addition to the park's commemorative planning for the 25th Anniversary of the opening of the National Prisoner of War Museum. Mr. Brooks will create social media posts, assist in designing temporary exhibits, and provide a monthly program on prisoner of war experiences leading up to the April 2023 anniversary.

As you may know, Jody Mays was promoted to a different park in late winter. We wish her all the best and hope to fill her position this summer. We were fortunate

to have Mr. Andrew Miller of Vicksburg National Military Park fill her role for a short time, and he has done excellent work during his short tenure.

We are grateful to AXPOW for the funding to establish an informational wayside at the Memorial Grove and complete oral history transcriptions. We have also received a donation from the Descendants of American POWs which will be used to complete even more oral history work. We anticipate starting this work in late summer this year. Thank you so much for your continued support of our joint mission.

## Memorial day at Andersonville



## Honor Bound

By Stewart M. Powell

*Reprint Courtesy of Air Force Magazine*

Navy Capt. Jeremiah A. Denton was the senior officer of the 40 Prisoners of War who left Hanoi on Feb. 12, 1973, aboard the first Air Force C-141 out of North Vietnam. Once airborne, Denton calmly asked a flight attendant for a piece of paper. He thought for a moment and then scribbled the memorable words that he would utter in a short time as he and his comrades stepped off the airplane into the arms of freedom at Clark AB in the Philippines.

"We are honored to have had the opportunity to serve our country under difficult circumstances," Denton declared. "We are profoundly grateful to our Commander in Chief and to our nation for this day. God bless America."

With that, the Navy pilot who went down in an A-6 carrier attack aircraft during a bombing run over North Vietnam's Thanh Hoa bridge complex on July 19, 1965, marked the end of the longest wartime captivity of any group of US prisoners in history.

It was a triumph for Denton, who had alerted the world to the communists' torture of prisoners in May 1966. Dragged before propaganda cameras after 72 hours of nonstop indoctrination, the sleep-deprived pilot had numbly blinked his eyelids to relay the message "t-o-r-t-u-r-e" in Morse code as a Japanese television news crew filmed the interview.

A total of 771 Americans were captured and interned during the Vietnam War. Of those, 113 died in captivity and 658, or 85 percent, were returned to US authorities during or at the end of a grueling conflict that claimed the lives of more than 58,000 American troops in Southeast Asia.

The number of prisoners taken during the Vietnam War was relatively small. Of the 142,255 Americans captured and interned during major wars in the 20th century, a total of 17,033 died in captivity. The Korean War had the highest casualty rate among US prisoners—with 38 percent of the 7,140 prisoners perishing.

For Americans searching for meaning in a controversial conflict and yearning for heroes, the POWs became a touchstone for the traditional values of loyalty and

inspiration often overlooked during the conflict itself.

## The First POW

The first American taken prisoner by the Viet Cong was Army Spec. 4 George F. Fryett, seized Dec. 26, 1961, while riding a bicycle on the way to a swimming pool on the outskirts of Saigon. He was freed in June 1962: His captors simply came out of the jungle at a main road and put him on a bus back to Saigon.

The last POW was seized Jan. 27, 1973—the day the cease-fire was signed in Paris. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Phillip A. Kientzler, shot down near the Demilitarized Zone, was held for two months in North Vietnam under perhaps the most benign conditions of the war, with captives and captors awaiting prisoner releases. Kientzler was freed March 27, 1973, with the last wave of captives to go home.

Between these two bookends, the story of American POWs unfolded. Their triumphs and tragedies are vividly recaptured in *Honor Bound: The History of American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia, 1961-1973*. The immensely detailed 592-page study was prepared by Stuart I. Rochester, deputy historian of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and Frederick Kiley, a former Air Force Academy professor and noted POW historian. Drawing from memoirs, interviews, classified documents, and other sources, the historians provide the most sweeping view of American POWs since the return of the prisoners in 1973.

"We were convinced in the end that, on the whole, the PWs [the acronym commonly used by the military services] of the Vietnam War were indeed an extraordinary company of men who endured an extraordinary captivity," the historians wrote. "Both suffering and valor, tragedy and triumph, occurred on a large scale."

Prisoners captured and held in South Vietnam had a far different experience than the aviator officers shot down and held in the North. During the early years, one out of three Americans taken prisoner was expected to die in captivity—a toll reduced to



## Honor Bound, cont'd...

one out of five by war's end. In the North, only one in 20 captives died in prison.

The longest held POW was captured in the South and spent much of his imprisonment there. Army Ranger Capt. Floyd J. "Jim" Thompson, commander of a Special Forces

detachment in Quang Tri Province, was captured March 26, 1964, following the shootdown near the DMZ of his low-flying reconnaissance aircraft. He was held at a dozen jungle sites during the nearly nine years before his release on March 16, 1973. Thompson's captivity made him the longest held Prisoner of War in American history.

In the North, Navy Lt. j.g. Everett Alvarez Jr. became the first American pilot shot down. His carrier-based A-4 Skyhawk was hit during retaliatory airstrikes on Vietnamese patrol boats and oil storage facilities Aug. 5, 1964, not long after the Gulf of Tonkin incident in which Navy destroyers Maddox and C. Turner Joy reported coming under North Vietnamese attack.

Alvarez, who ejected not far from shore, was captured by armed Vietnamese in a fishing vessel. By Aug. 11, he had been taken to Hanoi's notorious Hoa Lo Prison, a turn-of-the-century French-built facility with thick two-story concrete walls known in Vietnamese as the "fiery furnace." Rats infested his cell. Food, consisting of animal hooves, chicken heads, rotten fish, and meat covered with hair, was sickening.

## North and South

Prisoners in the North suffered far more extensive and systematic torture than comrades held captive in the South. "With the expanding American war effort, prison authorities were under increasing pressure to obtain information and statements that could be used for propaganda purposes," the historians said. "To produce these they had to break down the PWS' resistance."

The Air Force lost its first pilot in early 1965. Air Force Lt. Hayden J. Lockhart, flying an F-100, was seized by the communist forces March 2, 1965, after evading capture for a week. He was locked in the dreaded central prison in Hanoi soon thereafter.

The complex, ringed with guard towers, soon became known as the "Hanoi Hilton," with sections known as "Heartbreak Hotel," "New Guy Village," "Little Vegas," and "Camp Unity." The complex was so formidable that not a single US serviceman managed to make an escape during the entire war.

The most systematic torture of American POWs during the conflict began in fall 1965 and didn't end until fall 1969, when the Nixon Administration finally went public with evidence of the mistreatment. An estimated 95 percent of the prisoners in the North experienced some form of torture.

Navy Lt. j.g. Rodney A. Knutson, a radar intercept officer captured with pilot Lt. j.g. Ralph E. Gaither when their F-4 was shot down on Oct. 17, 1965, got an early taste of what lay ahead. His captors bound his arms so tightly that they lost circulation. He was denied food and water. He was beaten. When he still refused to cooperate, his torturers moved on to a new, more sinister method-the "rope

torture." Knutson was subjected to this technique on Oct. 25, 1965. The prisoner was forced face down onto a bunk with his ankles in stocks and a rope tied at his elbows, with the rope then pulled up to run through a hook in the ceiling. The guard hoisted the prisoner off the bunk so he could not ease any of his weight-producing extreme pain and constricting breathing.

USAF Capt. Konrad W. Trautman suffered the rope torture on a dozen occasions. "The pain is literally beyond description," said Trautman, who was shot down and captured Oct. 5, 1967. "After about 10 or 15 minutes in this position, tied up so tightly, your nerves in your arms are pinched off, and then your whole upper torso becomes numb. It's a relief. You feel no more pain. ... However when they release the ropes, the procedure works completely in reverse. It's almost like double jeopardy-you go through the same pain coming out of the ropes as you did going in."

## Hanoi March

On July 6, 1966, 52 prisoners were assembled, blindfolded, handcuffed in pairs, and taken by truck to downtown Hanoi. The plan was to parade the Americans in public view and then use them as props in a war crimes show-trial to take place at a nearby stadium. This event came to be known as the "Hanoi March" and is viewed as a watershed in the propaganda war. "Oh boy, I love a parade," quipped USAF Capt. Robert B. Purcell, captive since July 27, 1965, when his F-105 went down 30 miles west of Hanoi.

The prisoners were prodded through the streets at the point of bayonets, past the Soviet and Chinese Embassies and through threatening crowds standing 10

## Honor Bound, cont'd...

deep. One prisoner estimated the crowd as high as 100,000. Guards incited the angry mob with loudspeakers. Over a two-mile route, the POWs were punched and pummeled by flying bricks and bottles. The march highlighted the lengths to which Hanoi would go to score propaganda points against the US.

Air Force Capt. Earl G. Cobeil, captured on Nov. 5, 1967, feigned mental illness, as did some other POWs, to protect himself from the

experimental brainwashing carried out by a dreaded Cuban interrogator. The Cuban, known among POWs as "Fidel," convinced that Cobeil was faking, mercilessly beat him day after day. One day, Cobeil refused to bow. For the offense, Cobeil on May 21, 1968, was trussed in ropes overnight and mauled for 24 hours straight. Fidel, enraged, emerged from one torture session to shout to prisoners within earshot: "We've got [a POW] that's faking. Nobody's gonna fake and get away with it. ... I'm gonna teach you all a lesson. ... I'm gonna break this guy in a million pieces." Cobeil was last seen in the fall of 1970 and did not return with the other POWs in 1973. The Vietnamese later reported Cobeil had died in November 1970; his remains were returned March 6, 1974.

The prisoners believed that, when captured, "their mission had changed, from one of active fighting to one of resistance and survival," the Pentagon historians said. "They still had a soldierly function to perform—to disrupt, to stymie, to exhaust the enemy, finally to defeat him, in this case on the battlefield of propaganda and psychological warfare."

One prisoner estimated that communist torturers exacted statements of some sort from 80 percent of the POWs. As soon as they recovered from the physical trauma, the prisoners faced the torment of having collaborated and, theoretically, having violated the Code of Conduct. However, the Code, updated after the Korean War and reviewed after the USS Pueblo incident off Korea in 1968, assumed that captors would observe the minimum provisions of the Geneva Convention governing POWs. Under relentless torture, "the Code increasingly seemed to be a noble, but meaningless, abstraction that paled into irrelevance before the harrowing reality of the ropes and stocks," the historians found.

### Cherry's Ordeal

Vietnamese communists played the race card. Air Force Maj. Fred V. Cherry, the highest ranking black POW in the North, recalled his captors trying to exploit him by treating him differently. The Vietnamese housed Cherry with Navy Lt. Porter A. Halyburton in apparent hopes of sowing dissension between a black aviator and a white Southerner. The tactic backfired. Cherry later credited Halyburton with saving his life, when his injuries from being shot down became so infected that he had to be fed by hand and assisted with his bodily needs.

Cherry's resistance won him some of the war's most severe exactions—including one 93-day stretch of unbroken torture and 53 straight weeks of solitary confinement.

Prisoners fashioned elaborate means of reaching out to comrades. Navy Lt. Cmdr. Robert H. Shumaker spied a fellow prisoner in March 1965 and surreptitiously left a note in the latrine that was never found.

Guards found a second note, and Shumaker was threatened with punishment. His persistence paid off in the summer of 1965 when he left another note in the latrine that was read by Air Force Capt. Ronald E. Storz, downed while flying a small observation airplane near the DMZ. Storz scratched his name in reply on a piece of toilet paper with the burnt end of a match.

"Thus was accomplished the first exchange of messages among American PWs in North Vietnam," the historians said.

The names of captured pilots soon appeared on the undersides of plates and the handles of food pails as makeshift communications began. By the summer of 1965, Air Force Capt. Carlyle S. Harris perfected and spread a tap code that became the gold standard for communication throughout the prisoner population. Harris recalled the code from survival training at Stead AFB, Nev., where an instructor had shown him the code during a coffee break.

The prisoners used a five-by-five grid for the letters of the alphabet, with two numbers assigned to each letter. They dropped the "K." Prisoners quickly reverted to short cuts—so that "God bless you" became GBU—the universal sign-off.

By the summer of 1966, Navy Cmdr. James B. Stockdale, the senior officer and the POW leader, had become so proficient that he carried on a virtual conversation with Air Force Maj. Samuel R. Johnson, a prisoner in an adjoining cell.

In his memoir, Stockdale recounted, "Our tapping ceased to be just an exchange of letters and words; it became conversation.

## Honor Bound, cont'd...

Elation, sadness, humor, sarcasm, excitement, depression—all came through. ... I laughed to think what our friends back home would think of us two old fighter pilots standing at a wall, checking for shadows under the door, pecking out a final message for the day with our fingernails—'Don't let the bedbugs bite' [DLTBBB]."

The grueling, day-to-day stresses took a toll. A generational split developed between prisoners captured between 1965 and the bombing suspension of November 1968 and the younger generation of pilots shot down after resumption of bombing in December 1971. Newly seized prisoners tended to be more cynical about the war, the Pentagon historians found. They also operated under a more flexible interpretation of the Code of Conduct.

### "Peace Committee"

Dissension remained an undercurrent.

"In truth, over the years, there would be breakdowns of authority, lapses in the chain of command, intramural squabbling, even instances of resentment and outright disobedience of the leadership," the historians found. For example, by the fall of 1971, a group of at least eight enlisted prisoners became known as the "Peace Committee," its members receptive to the communists' propaganda. "Whether they were turncoats who willfully disobeyed orders, ratted on comrades, and bartered anti-war messages for special privileges, or were simply confused youngsters who sincerely opposed the war and saw no downside to expressing their feelings, depends on the perspective of participants," the historians said.

In January 1973, after the signing of the Paris peace accords, freedom drew near. Resentful American prisoners weighed the idea of executing members of the Peace Committee. USAF Lt. Col. Theodore W. Guy, the senior officer in charge at the POW camp called "Plantation," spent two weeks persuading the angry conspirators to drop that plan. He also talked them out of a subsequent plan to shave the Peace Committee members' heads. He planned to file court-martial charges after their release.

The most prominent turncoat of the war was Marine Pfc. Robert R. Garwood, 19, a motor pool driver who disappeared on Sept. 28, 1965, near Da Nang, South Vietnam. He cooperated with the enemy and remained in Vietnam long after the other Americans had been repatriated. Garwood himself voluntarily returned to the US on March 22, 1979, and was immediately taken into custody. The historians found that Garwood "did cross over [to collaboration with the communists] but that his 'defection' stemmed more from opportunism than any genuine political or ideological conversion."

Throughout the war, barriers to escape were indeed formidable, so much so that not a single GI made it to freedom from North Vietnam, according to the historians. While the Code of Conduct called for prisoners to "make every effort to escape," senior commanders realized that escape attempts triggered such Draconian retaliation

that attempts could jeopardize the lives of other prisoners.

Air Force Capt. John A. Dramesi, who was captured April 2, 1967, was determined to escape despite the odds. The pugnacious former star high school wrestler and son of a boxer had already tried to escape en route to Hanoi. For months, he and fellow conspirators squirreled away string, wire, and bamboo that could be used for tools or weapons. Donated scraps of food were hidden in a cache. They gathered straw, thread, and cloth to weave civilian attire. Conical peasant hats were fabricated from rice straw taken from sleeping mats. Dramesi acquired brown iodine pills for water purification and to help darken the skin color of those attempting to escape. On May 10, 1969, Dramesi and Air Force Capt. Edwin L. Atterberry advised the leadership, "We're going tonight."

### Horror Chamber

They did. Dramesi calculated that, by dawn, they had traveled four or five miles from the compound. But that was it. A North Vietnamese patrol found the pair hiding in a bramble thicket near an abandoned churchyard. The two were captured, blindfolded and handcuffed, and returned to prison. Dramesi was tortured for 38 days, flogged with a fan belt, punched, strapped into excruciating positions by ropes, and kept awake. He was strung in the ropes 15 times. Eventually he broke.

In a horror chamber close to Dramesi, the communists tortured Atterberry so gruesomely that his shrieks of pain could be heard two blocks away. Atterberry died on May 18, 1969, just eight days after the breakout.

The communists didn't stop with punishing Dramesi and Atterberry. They tortured other prisoners—some for weeks—who had not participated i

## Honor Bound, cont'd...

in the escape attempt and even extended the torture to other prisons.

"So traumatic had been the overall experience that even when escape became a more feasible option late in the captivity, the prisoners were still haunted by the catastrophic consequences of the Dramesi Atterberry attempt," the historians wrote.

To the South, the historians found that about two dozen Americans-about 10 percent-managed to escape from their captors and make it to freedom.

Perhaps the most stunning getaway was the one that was staged by Army Lt. James N. Rowe, a Special Forces advisor seized Oct. 29, 1963, in the Mekong Delta, along with Army Capt. Humbert R. Versace and Army Sgt. Daniel L. Pitzer. Versace later was executed by his captors. Pitzer was released in 1967.

On Dec. 31, 1968, after more than five years of jungle captivity, forced marches, starvation, and disease, Rowe and his Viet Cong guards cowered in the underbrush to elude US gunships and advancing South Vietnamese troops seeking battle. Suddenly, Rowe found himself alone with a single guard. He clubbed the man unconscious, rushed to a clearing, and waved frantically toward a descending US helicopter gunship.

Luckily, the commander of the air cavalry group, Army Maj. David Thompson, spied what he thought was a Viet Cong guerrilla vulnerable to capture and, rather than opening fire, swooped in to pick him up. "Only when the command ship swept in and lifted the black-clad figure out of the jungle amid a hail of fire from VC in the woods did the helicopter crew realize that it had bagged an American," the historians wrote.

Rowe left the Army in 1974, returned to duty in 1980, and died in April 1989, victim of an ambush by left-wing Marxist terrorists in the Philippines.

Dreams of escape similarly inspired two GIs who received the Medal of Honor posthumously for valor during captivity. Marine Capt. Donald G. Cook remained endlessly defiant after being captured east of Saigon in late December 1964, when Viet Cong overran the South Vietnamese force he was advising. Cook nursed civilian Douglas Ramsey, a US foreign service officer captured in January 1966, back from a sinking malaria-induced coma and saved his life, despite the ravages of his own illnesses. On Dec. 8, 1967, as the POWs were moved to another camp, Cook died on a jungle trail, probably from a malaria seizure, stated the historians. Ramsey's account of Cook's heroism, provided upon his release in 1973, led the US on May 16, 1980, to bestow on Cook the nation's highest decoration for valor.

### Tale of Lance Sijan

Air Force 1st Lt. Lance P. Sijan also received the Medal of Honor. The backseater on a disabled F-4 that crashed in Laos on Nov. 9, 1967, Sijan bailed out at low altitude and evaded capture for 46 days, despite a compound leg fracture, mangled hand, and head concussion. North Vietnamese soldiers found him by the side of the road on Christmas

morning 1967. He was taken in early 1968 to North Vietnam, where he was held with Air Force Lt. Col. Robert R. Craner and Capt. Guy D. Gruters. His Air Force Academy buddy Gruters did not recognize him. The strapping 220-pound former football player had lost a great amount of weight. His leg was badly infected, yet he asked his comrades to help him exercise so he could escape. Sijan died of pneumonia on Jan. 22, 1968. In March 1976, Sijan was awarded the Medal of Honor-the first graduate of the Air Force Academy to receive the award.

Some prisoners were lucky enough to win early release. Prisoner leaders, including Navy Lt. Cmdr. Richard A. Stratton and Navy Lt. Cmdr. John S. McCain III (now a US senator and Presidential candidate) rejected Vietnamese offers of immediate repatriation, fearing that such a release would yield a propaganda bonanza for Hanoi and have a disastrous impact on POW morale and cohesion. They also thought that such an act would run contrary to their duty to stay with their men until all were safe.

On Feb. 16, 1968, in the midst of the Tet Offensive, North Vietnam released three prisoners from Plantation, turning them over to peace activists Daniel Berrigan, a Jesuit priest, and Howard Zinn, a professor of history and government at Boston University. Navy Ensign David P. Matheny, a 24-year-old pilot, Air Force Maj. Norris M. Overly, and Air Force Capt. Jon D. Black were turned over. The freed officers became known at Plantation as the "MOB," an acronym for their last names. The stay-behinds debated whether the freed prisoners had broken faith. Many saw the

## Honor Bound, cont'd...

value in having Matheny carry out the memorized names of at least 70 POWs, helping the Pentagon update the list of captured pilots.

Senior officers became deeply concerned over the possibility that early release offers could decimate unity. USAF Lt. Col. Hervey S. Stockman, senior officer at Plantation, was fearful that his men now knew that Hanoi's "promises of amnesty were not completely empty." He quickly issued orders that future releases under the early release program would be accepted "only in order of shutdown with sick and wounded first."

Additional releases followed. Navy Seaman Douglas B. Hegdahl, freed by North Vietnam in 1969, came out with the first word actually confirming that American servicemen had been captured by the communists in Laos and were being held prisoner. Hegdahl, 19, the youngest POW seized in the North, had been serving as an ammunition handler aboard the guided-missile cruiser USS Canberra in the Gulf of Tonkin. During a night bombardment, he went topside where he was knocked overboard by the concussion of the ship's guns. He was picked up by North Vietnamese fishermen and turned over to the militia.

### Turning Point

The release of Hegdahl and two others on Aug. 4, 1969, marked a turning point in the Nixon Administration's public relations policy, with an end to the low-key approach to allegations of mistreatment and torture. The

plight of American prisoners was brought to the attention of the world, and, about that same time, a new regime took over in North Vietnam upon the death of Ho Chi Minh. Conditions began to improve in the prisons of North Vietnam.

By the time of the peace accords, a total of 113 American POWs had died in captivity. Operation Homecoming saw the return of 600 prisoners-591 Americans and nine foreign nationals. The Americans included:

USAF, 325  
Navy, 138  
Army, 77  
Marines, 26  
Civilians, 25

Air Force Lt. Col. Robinson Risner, a Korean War ace and test pilot, scored a symbolic victory for the prisoners at Unity who had just been notified of their impending release. Risner had been held captive since Sept. 16, 1965. He had commanded the Hanoi Hilton as the senior officer in charge since Sept. 20, 1965. An interpreter for the presiding North Vietnamese officer known as Dog read from a prepared text, telling the prisoners that they would be released 120 at a time in two week increments. Dog demanded that the prisoners "show good attitudes" until release. He then dismissed the prisoners.

For all of Dog's officiousness, it was not until Risner did a smart about-face, looked at his men, and issued the order that the prisoners moved. Risner called the men to attention. Some 400 men snapped to attention, and, as one POW remembered it, "the thud of 800 rubber tire sandals coming together smartly was awesome." Squadron commanders returned Risner's

salute and dismissed their squadrons in unison.

Some prisoners ran into each other's arms, hugged, and whooped with joy. Others felt the weight of their suffering drain from their bodies, what Navy Lt. Cmdr. Hugh A. "Al" Stafford called a "profound, bottomless fatigue."

"What the hell had I done the last seven [years]," wondered Navy Lt. Gerald L. Coffee, downed while on a photoreconnaissance mission near Vinh on Feb. 3, 1966. "During the prime years of my life, I'd sat on my ass in some medieval dungeons, broken my teeth, screwed up my arm, contracted worms and God knows what else, and had gotten old."

The vanguard of the prisoners arrived at Clark on Feb. 12, 1973. It was there that many of the ex-prisoners finally relinquished the self-control that had enabled them to survive.

## One of the Best

Ernest C. Brace, a pilot for a private airline flying supply missions in Laos and Thailand under contract to the US Agency for International Development, had been held since May 21, 1965, the day his small airplane was ambushed on a runway in Laos.

He "survived barbarous mistreatment and decimating illness over an eight-year period ... to become one of the most seasoned and respected PWs among all the Americans captured in Southeast Asia," the historians wrote.

But upon hearing that his wife had left him, Brace broke down and cried at the processing

## Honor Bound, cont'd...

center in an emotional outpouring that he could not remember yielding to through all the years of beatings and persecution.

Over three to five days, prisoners called families, went through debriefings and medical evaluations, and, in general, decompressed before the trip home.

Air Force Maj. George E. "Bud" Day, captured Aug. 26, 1967, after being shot down near the DMZ and later awarded the Medal of Honor for heroism, learned that some family members had died during his captivity. Day had managed to escape his initial capture and evade the enemy for two weeks and was within two miles of a US Marine outpost when he was shot and recaptured. His legendary resistance to communist torturers won him the everlasting respect of his colleagues.

Day recalled feeling "as if I might melt into the phone" as he spoke to his wife for the first time in more than five years. "She came through strong and clear. She was well. The children were well. They were as anxious to see me as I was to see them. All of the important things in my existence were in order."

Lt. John H. Nasmyth, taken captive Sept. 4, 1966, recalled locating a bathtub in a staff room, locking the door, and "wallowing" in the hot water until it spilled over the tub. His first bath lasted an hour-the first of half a dozen he took the first night of freedom.

As they prepared to fly home, some ex-prisoners found it hard to leave fellow POWs who had

shared the same horrific experiences.

"Of course, getting out was what we had all anticipated and dreamed of," recalled Craner, captured Dec. 20, 1967. "But I and everyone did establish friendships and very intimate personal relationships up there, which I don't believe any other set of circumstances would have allowed. And it was with just a little bit of melancholia that I finally said goodbye."

At Travis AFB, Calif., Air Force Capt. Peter P. Camerota got a quick lesson that little had changed. A crew member on a B-52 that had been shot down in the December 1972 raids, he had eluded capture for 10 days by hiding in a cave. He knew he was home when he went through processing and he was told that he would be paid \$5 for each of his 88 days in captivity. But, Camerota explained, he had been in North Vietnamese territory for 98 days, including the 10 days of evasion.

The official explained that the money was expressly for "substandard quarters and subsistence" and that during his 10 days evading capture he had no quarters and subsistence and therefore did not have substandard quarters and subsistence.

Coming face to face with that bureaucratic explanation, said Camerota, "I knew I was home."

### Coming Home

The historians found that some prisoners made the transition to life back home more easily than others.

"Some picked up their lives as normally as if they had merely

served overseas for the better part of a decade, and some never recovered from dissolved marriages, missed career opportunities, or the awful memories," the study found.

Two returned POWs committed suicide soon after release. One, Marine Sgt. Abel L. Kavanaugh, was a young man captured on April 24, 1968, after being inadvertently left behind by Marine helicopters lifting his unit back to base camp. Kavanaugh had been a member of the so-called Peace Committee. He killed himself June 27, 1973.

Ex-prisoners ran for public office, including four elected to Congress—Denton, McCain, Johnson, and Douglas B. "Pete" Peterson. Peterson, an Air Force captain who later represented a Florida Congressional district, became the first postwar US ambassador to Vietnam, taking up his post on May 9, 1997.

"Those who made it back gave their countrymen an occasion to celebrate patriotism and heroism unencumbered by the vexing moral and political issues that beclouded so much of the war effort," the Pentagon historians concluded. "The PWs, even when they were no longer incarcerated, continued to wield a symbolic power out of proportion to their small numbers. Their proud return to a grateful nation remains one of the few truly shining moments of that troubled era."

*Stewart M. Powell, White House correspondent for Hearst Newspapers, has covered national and international affairs since 1970 while based in the United States and Britain. His last article for Air Force Magazine was "A Half Century of NATO," which appeared in the April 1999 issue.*

# pow/mia

Mary Schantag, Chairman  
P.O.W. Network  
info@pownetwork.org



## I Tried for 25 years

In May of 2021, we were asked to get the military record of a WWII vet. Unknown to us, we were only halfway thru the National Personnel Records Center shutdown, which did not end until March 7, 2022.

Despite being unable to get the full WWII record yet, we were lucky enough to have the help of a great lady, Tina Davis, with DLA Troop Support. In addition to the full record, we asked that Todd Larson's father, Leon Milo Larson (RIP) be authorized his Prison of War medal, for captivity in 1945. Not only did she make sure the medal was engraved, and received in time for the Westpac'rs Annual Reunion in Branson, MO in May 2022, she authorized the World War II Victory Medal as well.

---

As of June 6, 2022, the number of Americans Missing and Unaccounted-for from the Vietnam War remains at 1,584.

There are 81,614 still unaccounted for US Military personnel since 1941.

Without the military record available for review, no Purple Heart was authorized for presentation.

The next morning, just after the Memorial Service for their fallen shipmates, Todd stopped me and again said "Thank You." He further stated, "I tried for twenty-five years. I don't know how you did it.

I have often wondered why a returnee needs to "prove" captivity. Is the military and USG not tasked with knowing who of their military is in enemy hands? Do they not publish lists of those captured, missing or KIA/BNR?

That is very infuriating while the VA seems to require no proof to add "POW" to a patients file.

The evidence is in the Veterans Admin Inspector Generals' office past prosecutions of Stolen Valor, false claims and lying to a government agent, long after claims were paid for years.

Case in point - Edward Daily, a Koran War veteran, was only prosecuted 15 years after he started receiving benefits. He collected over \$412,000 before being exposed. Others have claimed Medal of Honor, or torture in their PTSD psych exam. Bingo – POW granted.

In 2009, Allan Breed wrote an article for the Associate Press. The headline read "POW benefit claimants exceed recorded POWs."

Congress promised hearings. Others mentioned cleaning house. Nothing ever materialized, and Stolen Valor claims continue to climb on a daily basis. Few are even actually prosecuted anymore.

The article noted, "21 Gulf War POW survive, but 286 get disability benefits." And "Only 661 officially recognized prisoners returned from that war alive (from Vietnam) – and about 100 of those have since died...But 996 purported POWs are getting disability payments, the VA told AP."

" 'They're either phonies or there's a major administrative error somewhere,' retired Navy Cmdr. Paul Galanti, who is on a VA advisory panel for POW issues, said when told of the agency's numbers" in 2009.



## pow-mia, cont'd...

Cheryl Cerbone, AXPOW's own CEO, says, "Every veteran suffers when phonies get benefits... it's another piece of the shrinking pie ... we can't seem to find anyone to listen anymore."

Meanwhile, DPAA continues its slow trickle of identifications. As Moe Moyer, Honor, Release, Return, Inc., states, " 81,605 US Military Personnel still unaccounted for or Missing in Action since 1941 and at the current rate of RECOVERY it will take DPAA another 400 years to close this mission. Totally UNACCEPTABLE!!! "

The DPAA listing shows one service member ID'd in May, four in April, five in March, four in

February, six in January. Twelve fought in WWII, five during the Korean Conflict. None were identified from Vietnam or the Cold War. In Fiscal Year 2022, 61 from WWII and 10 from Korea have been identified.

In May, DPAA's Offutt lab identified the remains of Chicago native, Medal of Honor recipient Lt. Col. Addison Baker from the 1943 raid on 'Hitler's Gas Station.' He was lost in the famous "Black Sunday" raid on the Ploesti oil refinery complex. He was the pilot in the lead aircraft in a wave of 32 B-24D Liberators from the 93rd Bomb Group. The press release also noted that of the 1,763 airmen who took off, 310 were killed, and 190 were taken prisoner, 54 aircraft were lost out of the one hundred and seventy-eight on the mission.

The story is on the DPAA website. In Late April, Trevor Reed, a former Marine was released from harrowing captivity in Russia. He had been held since 2019, and returned to the USA after a prisoner swap.

Meanwhile in Ukraine, War Crimes trial have begun with Russian soldiers being put on trial for atrocities that rage from murder to the rape of infants and children.

The Red Cross is working with Ukrainians finally evacuated from the Azovstal steel plant.

The 1730 fighters are now considered "POWs" in an attempt to curb the "barbarity of war" according to AP stories. They appear to have been brought in to Russia.



Just prior to the reunion banquet, Todd Larson was presented his father's two medals, and a U.S. Flag flown in his father's honor by Lt David "Mac" McAllister, USN (Ret.)

# Civilian

## The STIC Tissue Issue\* Part I

By Prof. Martin Meadows

Recently I saw the following aphorism in an emailed collection of similar expressions: “You never appreciate what you have till it’s gone. Toilet paper is a good example.” That saying is quite amusing; however, the reason I mention it is because that is precisely what reminded me of, and thereupon gave me the idea to revisit, the situation that existed in Santo Tomas Internment Camp (a.k.a. STIC) regarding the rarely if ever discussed subject of toilet paper, now known more politely as bathroom tissue — hereinafter to be referred to as BT. I decided to explore the topic partly for the edification (?) of those who are unaware of it; partly in the hope that it would elicit similar recollections from others (especially women, whose perspective unfortunately is necessarily missing here); partly for my own records; and primarily because I was unable to find any treatment of it elsewhere. That is surprising, considering that BT is almost the equal of food and drink as a necessity of life (he said tongue-in-cheek). To be specific, I found no discussion of it in the four principal sources of information about camp life that I consulted for this brief survey. They include three primary sources (primary in the sense that they (1) were written by internees, and (2) are about STIC

in general rather than personal accounts centered on the authors), and one secondary source. These are cited next in a short bibliographic detour.

The three primary sources are A. V. H. Hartendorp, *The Japanese Occupation of the Philippines*, two huge volumes (signed, incidentally, by the author); F. H. Stevens, *Santo Tomas Internment Camp*; and James E. McCall, *Santo Tomas Internment Camp: Stic in Verse and Reverse*. All of the primary sources lack indexes (where BT references, if any, might have been listed); and, though the Stevens work has a chapter on “Sanitation and Health,” there is no allusion to BT in its six sections. The lone secondary source is the comprehensive survey by Frances B. Cogan, *Captured: The Japanese Internment of American Civilians in the Philippines, 1941-1945* (also signed by the author). Her book does contain an index, but, index or not, I can neither find nor recall any kind of coverage of BT in these (or any other) sources. Of course, that does not rule out the possibility that such coverage may exist, whether elsewhere or even in the four named sources. (Note: Curtis Brooks, STIC alumnus and member of the notorious Maurice Francis gang, astutely has suggested that perhaps the mimeographed pages of the STIC news sheet *Internews* may contain such information.) And now to move from procedural to substantive matters.

Initially, I should specify three cautions, or qualifications. First, what follows is based entirely on purely personal recollections. Second, those memories seem to be more acute for roughly the last two years of STIC life (perhaps because the “tissue issue” was less critical during the first year). Third, as is to be expected, I deal only with male contexts (i.e., men’s bathrooms) and male concerns (i.e., no mention of, e.g., sanitary pads). Regardless, I assume (erroneously or not) that my BT experiences were not unique to me. In any event, with those qualifications in mind, the necessary starting point of any discussion of this subject is the ineluctable fact that BT was not available either at a central place in the bathrooms, or within the individual toilet stalls. That is because of one major (and self-evident) reason: like everything else of value in STIC, BT was in short supply, and would have vanished quickly had it been made available unrestrictedly.

That situation prevailed in all bathrooms, but — to digress — there was one feature that possibly was unique to the bathroom that I used, which was located at the south-side rear of the third floor in the Main Building. That feature was maximally annoying, to put it mildly — all of the half-dozen toilet stalls there lacked not only doors but any kind of covering to shield their occupants. Although I did use other bathrooms on a few occasions, I did that so infrequently that I do not recall whether they had a similar problem, except in the case of a bathroom in the Education Building, where I distinctly recall the stalls did have doors. And, since it is relevant to the question of uniqueness, it is worth noting that at one point I had to use the women’s third-floor bathroom — that was shortly after liberation, when Japanese

shelling forced third-floor men for several days to use the women's bathroom because, unlike the men's bathroom, it was located on the safer (north) side of the building. That was how I learned that the toilet stalls there did have covering, in the form of flimsy green "curtains" — cloth that extended from about six feet high down to within about two feet from the floor. Come to think of it, for the sake of total accuracy I should say that I can speak only for the first stall, the only one which the women generously let the men use — the other four or five stalls were reserved for themselves. I had no chance (or desire) to notice the other stalls, for conditions in the bathroom were not conducive to lingering — no water supply, overflowing commodes, overpowering stench, etc.

And now, back to the subject. The absence of BT in the bathrooms meant that it had to be supplied from some other source. That is where the role of room monitor enters the picture. In my room (#43, located as noted on the third floor, at the front of the Main Building), its denizens — usually about 55 in number — took it for granted that our room monitor (a former seaman named Henry Pile) was responsible for distributing the BT allotted to our room. But they disagreed on the issue of how often to distribute the BT. One faction, perhaps assuming that most people are sufficiently rational and disciplined to control themselves, thought that each person should receive a full week's BT allotment at one time. The other faction, evidently fearing that those individuals unable to discipline themselves might finish their BT supply too rapidly, favored doling it out on a daily basis. As might

be expected, our room monitor preferred not to be burdened with the task of daily rationing, thus BT was distributed on a weekly basis in our room (and, I assume, in most if not all other rooms; I do not know about the Annex, which housed mothers with very young children).

Now to turn from the question of frequency (how often BT was distributed) to that of quantity (how much BT was distributed). I was unable to remember the ration amount, but fortunately the aforementioned Curtis Brooks came to the rescue — he recalled that each (male) internee was allotted six sheets daily. In light of that meager quota, even the obvious deserves comment — namely, that most internees had to try to supplement their BT supply with whatever else they could scrounge. One example of that was newspapers, which were available via the English-language Japanese propaganda sheet the Tribune; it was allowed into STIC until Nip losses in the war could no longer be camouflaged as victories, whereupon it was banned. (It is tempting to speculate that, when using the newspaper as BT, internees perhaps were thinking that it was serving its proper function.) Another example that I am aware of — or at least that I suspect — concerns a less obvious source of supplementary BT: in some of the many books that I borrowed from the camp library (located in the lobby of the Main Building), occasionally I would find that pages were missing, a fact which I consider probable evidence of an understandable but extremely annoying means of supplementation.

It would be interesting, in my opinion, to know not only the percentage of internees who did and who did not handle their BT allotments responsibly, but also the consequences of their not having done so. Internees of course were not surveyed about this, and even if a survey on such a personal matter had been feasible, the idea of doing so undoubtedly never would have occurred to anyone. Still, it would be instructive, I think, to speculate, however sketchily, as to what a standard survey would have involved — more specifically, what kinds of questions internees might have been asked. It seems to me that three basic aspects of the issue should have been examined, ideally focused on the following three questions: Did you apportion your BT supply properly? Did you handle it properly? What did you do if/when you found yourself without BT when you needed it? (The past tense in the questions assumes a post-liberation survey.) Naturally I can answer these questions only for myself, but I am also able to add a few comments about others in connection with (3)(c) below, thanks in large part to what friends told me during internment.

(1) First of all, being (relatively) conscientious and organized, I customarily apportioned my BT supply properly, meaning that I allocated it equally over seven days.

(2) Second, I handled my daily quota properly — that is, I made sure to carry it with me at all times, just as, say, one normally would carry a wallet at all times.

(3) Third — no doubt as a result of (1) and (2) — I do not recall having found myself without BT when I needed it. Based on recollections of my contacts with others (mostly boys my age — I rarely interacted more than casually with girls, or with adults other than my parents), I can cite three possible tactics that could have been used when out of BT.

(a) First, in theory the most logical tactic would have been to return to your room to retrieve some of your weekly BT supply (if any was left). This alternative, however, is based on two potentially faulty assumptions — that you do have BT in your room, and that you also have enough time to get to it.

(b) The second tactic is one which I encountered on perhaps 8-10 occasions — namely, when a friend would stop me to ask whether I could loan him any BT (which of course he would promise to repay). If my daily BT supply was gone, I could say “Sorry” without remorse; but if not, I refused such requests anyway, for two reasons: partly because I did not trust the promises, but mainly because (needless to say) I might have to use the BT myself.

(c) Before discussing the third tactic, a “trigger warning” is in order — overly sensitive individuals should read no further. To try to soften the impact, I should first state that, as far as I know (i.e., based on my own and others’ observations and on others’ admissions to me personally), this tactic seemingly was used only rarely, not as a matter of course. In any event, to put it bluntly, if you urgently needed BT but could neither retrieve nor borrow any, there was a last-resort tactic: after defecating, head immediately for the showers at the far end of the bathroom to cleanse yourself while showering. (Note: The several showers in the third-floor bathroom — I don’t recall how many, probably four or five — were not compartmented, and thus, as in the instance of the toilet stalls, there was no such thing as privacy there.) To repeat, this expedient was (again, as far as I know) rarely used; nonetheless, it was used — and both adults and youths alike at times were compelled to resort to it.

This concludes an unavoidably cursory, and perhaps to some an offensive, overview of what I have called the STIC “tissue issue.” As noted at the outset, it is a subject which has received hardly any attention in works with which I am familiar. It is difficult to understand the reason(s) for this oversight affecting coverage of STIC. There are several possible explanations — it may be that the subject has been:

- (1) neglected (because of being considered unimportant); or
- (2) overlooked (because of lack of awareness of it, likely resulting chiefly from concern with more obvious internee problems); or
- (3) avoided (because of a conscious decision, influenced by, e.g., lack of information, time, and/or space); or
- (4) deliberately concealed (presumably because of its inherently unpleasant nature in general, and especially because of some of its most unsavory / deplorable / embarrassing implications in particular, as discussed in the preceding paragraph).

Whatever the reason(s), the “tissue issue” (warts and all) at last has been broached in and of itself. Conceivably it might now even receive the proverbial 15 minutes of fame — or infamy. — MM (a.k.a. Martin Meadows)

\*Originally the title was “STIC Tic: Eschew Tissue Issue.” But because that title required a somewhat convoluted explanation at the start, I acceded to my daughter’s suggestion to simplify both the title and the introductory paragraph. — MM

Part II will appear in the Oct-Dec 2022 EX-POW BULLETIN

# Becoming "Allies in Healing"

By Jill Drummond, Ph.D.



*There was a massive explosion, then smoke filled the cockpit as flames streamed off the left wing of the massive B-52. Within minutes, the aircraft would be engulfed in flames. The choice to stay or to eject was a split-second, life-or-death decision. Bail Out! Bail Out! Bail Out!*

On December 22, 1972, my husband, Air Force Captain David Drummond, had been flying a B-52 over Hanoi during the Linebacker II bombing campaign that brought an end to the Vietnam War. His aircraft was struck by two surface-to-air missiles, causing the crew of six men to eject right over the heart of Hanoi. He was eventually captured and imprisoned in the Hanoi Hilton for three months before his release in late March of 1973. Amazingly, his entire crew survived.

At that time, understanding of combat PTSD was in its infancy. What most returning veterans did was try to put it all behind them. They turned their attention to their jobs and families and got on with their lives. This sometimes worked....until it didn't anymore.

Almost forty years after David's return from Hanoi, we were in trouble. I say "we" because PTSD not only affects the veteran but their family as well. Looking back now, armed with a better understanding of PTSD, we know retirement is a typical time when PTSD symptoms can re-emerge. Three years earlier, thanks to encouragement from his buddies in American Ex-Prisoners of War, David had been treated for some of the more dramatic symptoms of PTSD (nightmares and flashbacks). But retirement brought on a mounting list of new symptoms, including depressed mood, a very short temper, road rage and excessive drinking. Eventually, we read through a checklist of PTSD symptoms, many of which David was experiencing, and he decided to get into treatment. What we learned during the process of treatment and recovery was too valuable to keep to ourselves.

It took me five years to write the book we wished had been available to us as we struggled to make sense of what was happening. There were already many helpful, well-written books about the stress and trauma of war and about treatment for these conditions. But no other book has emphasized the power of your relationship with a spouse or partner to help you recover from post-traumatic stress. That's why I wrote *Allies in Healing: A Couples' Toolkit of Resources for Recovering from PTSD*.

Whether you are a married or single veteran, the partner of a veteran, or a family member or friend, the most important first step is to learn how post-traumatic stress disrupts the nervous system. Then you'll understand why it has such a huge impact on thinking, feelings, behavior and relationships. Life will start to make sense.

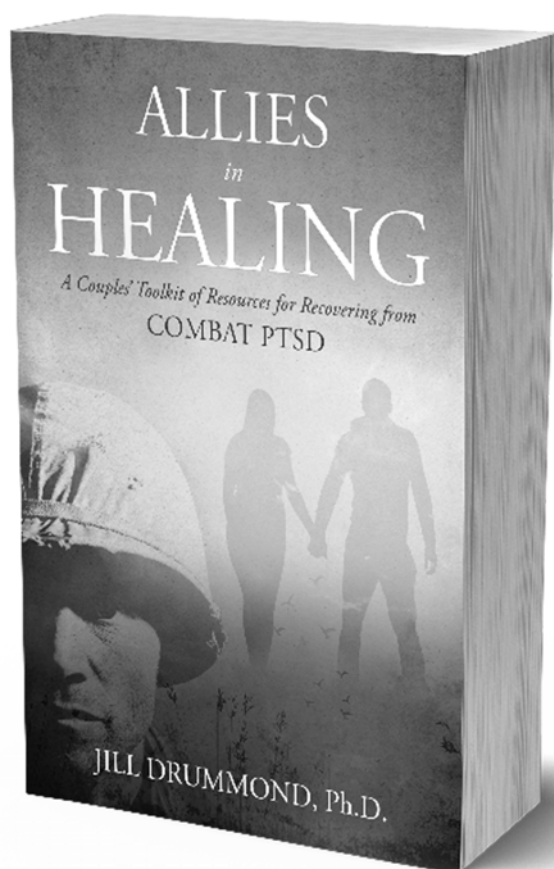
It's also important to realize that social support, especially the support of a loving partner, is a key factor in recovery. And there's a lot of research to support this. That's why having your spouse involved

in your treatment can make all the difference in the world. David and I spent almost a year in couples counseling at our local Vet Center, learning about PTSD and how to work as a team toward recovery. PTSD can seriously disrupt relationships, so becoming “allies in healing” made all the difference in the world.

I want to emphasize another point: *We are always doing the best we can in the present moment with the tools we have available.* When coping with difficult situations and feelings, we’re limited by what we already know and what is available around us. Things like excessive drinking, withdrawal or aggression are not simply “bad behavior,” they’re your best attempts to help yourself feel better when healthier tools aren’t available. I want you to have more tools and healthier tools to choose from.

In *Allies in Healing*, we present a wide range of healing resources. There are many things you can do with others, including individual, group or couples counseling, as well as veterans’ yoga, gardening and music groups. Other resources can be used on your own to calm your nervous system, like meditation, deep muscle relaxation, breathing exercises and neurofeedback. Writing is another way to support your recovery. And there are also many online resources right at your fingertips.

If you are suffering from PTSD, please reach out for the support that will help you recover from PTSD. And if your relationship with your spouse or partner is important to you. I hope you’ll draw on its great potential to help you heal.



*Allies in Healing: A Couples' Toolkit of Resources for Recovering from Combat PTSD* can only be purchased at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

*Book Review by AXPOW National Commander Robert G. Certain*

*Dr. Drummond has constructed a very readable and sensitive guide for couples, even families, to not only survive but to thrive in the aftermath of traumatic events that result in some manifestation of PTSD. By drawing on her own experience and that of her former-POW husband, she gives real examples of the psychological concepts she discusses. Consequently, she presents in clear words methods and practices that promote calm, healing, growth, and healthy functioning. As I read through this book, I often regretted that it was not available to me when I was first released from the prisons of North Vietnam.*

*I will recommend this book to anyone who is suffering the negative aftereffects of trauma (PTSD) resulting in dysfunction of any kind, whether the trauma came from combat, car wrecks, storms, sexual abuse or any other event. Somewhere in here is a method to begin the journey to renewed peace and joy.*

*Robert G. Certain*

*Chaplain, USAF (Retired)*

*National Commander, American Ex-Prisoners of War*

*Author of Unchained Eagle*

# Request for membership application

## American Ex-Prisoners of War

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

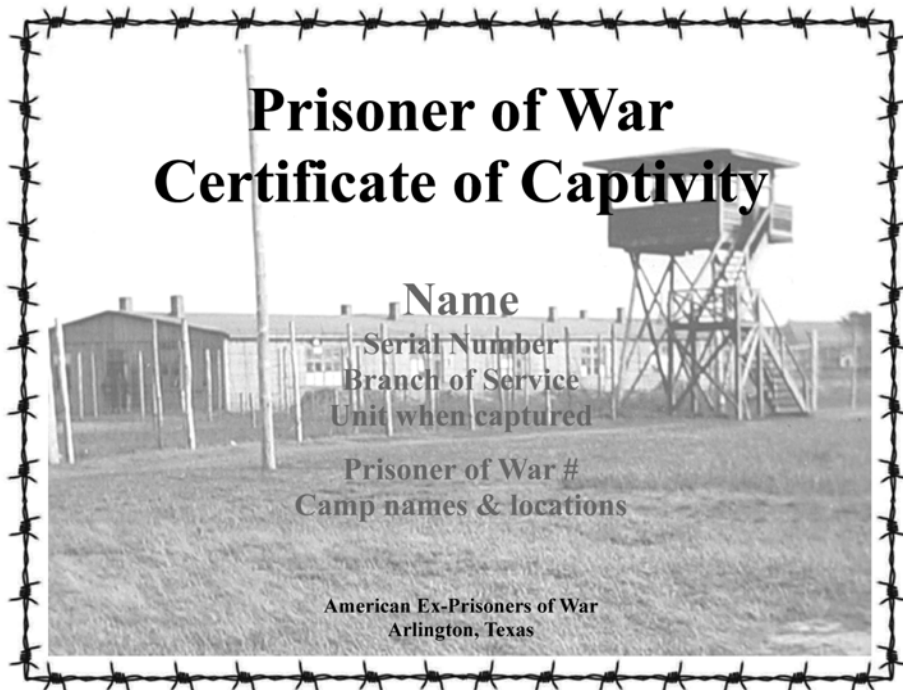
CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE/EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership is open to US Military and Civilians captured because of their US citizenship and their families/descendents.

DO NOT send dues with this request for an application.

Mail to: American Ex-Prisoners of War PO Box 3445 Arlington, TX 76007-3445 (817) 649-2979 email: HQ@axpow.org



### Certificate of Captivity

\$25.00

Suitable for framing, this certificate of captivity, printed on 8½ x 11" quality paper, proudly displays your history as a prisoner of war.

Each certificate background is personalized to the theatre of operation. We will need your name, service number, branch of service, unit when captured, POW number (if known), camp names and locations. You may also include a picture with your order. To receive this certificate from AXPOW, please order from National Headquarters by calling 817-649-2979 or email: axpow76010@yahoo.com.



# Contributions



please send donations to:

National Headquarters, PO Box 3445,  
Arlington, TX 76007-3445. Checks must  
be made payable to AXPOW or American  
Ex-Prisoners of War.

## GENERAL FUND

- In memory of Anne Marko, by Adrian & Gaynor Senyszyn
- In memory of Anne Marko, by Connie Kostyra
- In memory of Anne Marko, by Callan Atlanta team
- In memory of Harry Preston Tripp, by his wife Barbara B Tripp
- In memory of Connie Ford, by Betty Ford
- In memory of Fay Beck, by Phyllis Hutchins
- In memory of Frank George, by Wilma Youarski
- In memory of Frank George, by Diane Stepneski
- In memory of Frank George, by Linda Cerra
- In memory of my husband John C Major, by Peggy Major
- In memory of Orville J Jackson, by Patrick & Deanna Koopmann
- In memory of Polly Hemphill, by Amy Deranleau
- In memory of Raymond Toelle, by Friends and Family
- In memory of Raymond Toelle, by Laverne Schwellinger
- In memory of Raymond Toelle, by Mark S Wirtz
- In memory of Raymond Toelle, by Terry Rogers
- In memory of Raymond Toelle, by Debra Heffernan
- In memory of Raymond Toelle, by Margaret Bonvicini
- In memory of Raymond Toelle, by Louis Hastreiter

## Golden Lion Reunion

The 75th reunion of the 106th Infantry Division Association will be held August 24-28, 2022 in Arlington, Virginia. For more information, see: <http://106thinfdivassn.org/reunion2022.html> or contact Wayne Dunn at 410-409-1141 or email [WayneDunn@comcast.net](mailto:WayneDunn@comcast.net)

# The Meaningful Gift

A number of years ago, one of our members made the decision to establish a bequest to the American Ex-Prisoners of War. He felt strongly that he truly cared about our future and wanted to leave a legacy to us. He and his wife are now gone, but their generous gift enabled them to demonstrate in a very meaningful way their commitment to AXPOW.

You, too can take action today to help ensure that the American Ex-Prisoners of War remains through your will or living trust. This gift can be funded with cash or securities, mutual funds or other investments that are not serving your current needs. This special gift will benefit future generations as well as we continue our transition to a true legacy organization.

It's very simple to make a bequest to the American Ex-Prisoners of War. Simply share this sentence with your attorney or financial planner and they can add the following to your will or living trust:

"I give, devise and bequeath to the American Ex-Prisoners of War, PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_(named investment) or \_\_\_\_\_percent of the rest, residue and remainder of my estate."

Your generous support of our programs over the years has made a tremendous difference to ex-POWs and their families. Please take a few minutes of your time to help ensure our future. And feel free to contact CFO Marsha Coke at [axpow76010@yahoo.com](mailto:axpow76010@yahoo.com), or CEO Cheryl Cerbone at [axpowceo@comcast.net](mailto:axpowceo@comcast.net). Phone #817-649-2979.

## Thank You!



# taps



Please submit taps notices to:  
Cheryl Cerbone, 23 Cove View Drive, South Yarmouth, MA 02664

BAKER, GEORGIA LUELLE ELBON, 92, of Reynoldsville, W. VA died May 17, 2022. She was the widow of Ex-POW Harold "Dean" Baker, who passed away in 2000. Georgia was an active AXPOW member; serving as Treasurer for the Barbed Wire Mountaineer Chapter for many years. Survivors include 2 sons, 1 daughter, 7 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren, 2 great-great-grandchildren, 1 sister and their families.

BECK, FAY ARLENE, of Widefield, CO passed away Jan. 31, 2022 at the age of 90. She was the wife of Edwin H. Beck; both were life members of AXPOW and the Rocky Mountain Chapter in Colorado. Fay and Edwin were married more than 60 years and have 5 sons, 3 daughters, 9 grandchildren, 11 great-grandchildren, 2 great-great-grandchildren who survive her.

BOYD, CHARLES G. of Haymarket, VA, passed away March 23, 2022. He was 82. A 36-year Air Force Veteran, he was the only Vietnam POW to become a four-star general. In 1966, during a mission to attack surface-to-air-missile sites around Hanoi, the North Vietnamese capital, Boyd's F-

105D was shot down after repeated passes through enemy fire. He ejected, was captured and spent the next seven years as a POW in North Vietnam, which he described as "the defining experience" of his life. His first wife, Millicent, predeceased him; he leaves his wife Jessica, one son and one daughter.

CLARK, MARCIA IVORY, 93, of Scottsdale AZ, passed away March 15, 2022. Marcia spent the first three years of her teens as a civilian prisoner of war in the Santo Thomas Internment Camp in Manila Philippines during WWII. February 3, 1945 the day she was liberated, was a day she celebrated the rest of her life. Marcia was forever grateful to the soldiers, nurses and fellow internet's who saved her life. She was a member of AXPOW and the Southern Arizona Chapter. Marcia is survived by her two sons and daughter in laws, six grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

FORD, CONSUELO CARMEN "CONNIE", of Grass Valley, CA died Feb. 14, 2022. She was 89. She was born in Manila. During WWII, Connie was held along with members of her family for 37 months in the

Santo Tomas Internment Camp in the Philippines. Connie was a life members of AXPOW and long-time member of BACEPOW (now Civilian Ex-Prisoners of War – CPOW) She was also a member of the 49ers Chapter. Survivors include several nieces, nephews and friends.

FORD, JAMES CORREY, of Winfield passed away Apr. 27, 2022 at the age of 96. He was captured while serving with the 8th AF, 379th BG; he was held until liberation. Jim is survived by one son and one daughter and their families; his wife Kathryn predeceased him.

GUSTAFSON, C. NORMAN, 99, of Scotch Plains, NJ, died Feb. 7, 2022. He served with the 8th AF. 384th BG during WWII. His plane was shot down, he was captured and held in Stalag 17B. Norman was a member of AXPOW and Garden State Chapter #1. He leaves his wife of 75 years, Elizabeth, 1 daughter, 2 sons, 3 granddaughters, 1 great-grandson and their families.

LEWIS, DELLA P., of Camden, NJ, passed away March 4, 2022. She was the wife of Korean War Ex-POW Willie J. "Coney" Lewis. Coney served

## taps, cont'd...

as West Virginia State Commander, AXPOW. Della's hobbies included crocheting and taking care of her family. She is survived by her loving husband of 68 years, 3 sons, 4 grandchildren, 2 great-grandchildren, 1 great-great-grandchild, 1 sister, 1 brother, many cousins, nieces, nephews and their families.

MARKO, ANNA widow of Ex-POW Leon Marko (ETO, 2B 5B 7A) died Apr. 14, 2022. She was 97 and an active member of AXPOW and the Garden State 2 Chapter. She leaves 2 sons, 1 daughter, 5 grandchildren, 3 great-grandchildren, and their families. She also is survived by 1 sister and many nieces and nephews.

PERDUE, CAWTHON BAILY, JR. of Rockwall, TX died March 14, 2022 at the age of 97. Cawthon Bailey Perdue, Jr., of Rockwall, Texas, passed away on March 14, 2022, at the age of 97. He was captured while serving with the 8th AF, 3rd AD, 388th BG, flying out of England. He was held in Stalag Luft 1, Barth Germany. After repatriation, he married Louise Pepper. CB is survived by three daughters and their families, his poodle, Jack and friends around the world. He was a man known for his life-long service to his country, his unwavering love for his family, and his solid moral compass.

POWELL, HELEN J., 91, of Camanche, IA passed away March 4, 2022. She was a long-time active member of AXPOW and a

good friend to all of us who knew her. Helen and Don were hard workers at National Conventions. Don predeceased her; she is survived by 1 daughter, 1 son, 4 grandchildren, 2 great-grandchildren and their families, and a large, extended group of friends who will miss her.

REYNOLDS, JON A, age 84, died Apr. 16, 2022 in Bethesda, MD. He spent more than seven years as a prisoner of war after the aircraft he was piloting was shot down over North Vietnam in 1965. He remained in the Air Force after being repatriated, retiring in 1990 as a BG. Survivors include his wife Emilee, one son, one daughter, one brother and one grandchild.

RICKEY, STANTON M. of Dallas, OR passed away Nov. 9, 2021. He was 101 years old. During WWII, he served with the Army Air Corp. He was captured over Konstanz, Germany and held at Stalag Luft 1 until liberation. His first wife, Helen, predeceased him. He is survived by his wife, Adeline, 4 daughters, 1 son, 11 grandchildren, 5 great-grandchildren and their families.

ST. PIERRE, HENRY J. 99, of Pawtucket, RI died Jan. 23, 2022. He served in the Army, 1st Inf. Div., Battery B, 32nd FA, participating in campaigns in North Africa, Sicily, Omaha Beach. He was captured near Merode, Germany and held. Survivors include 1 son, 2 granddaughters, 2 nephews, 4 nieces and their families.

TOELLE, RAYMOND E., of Butler, WI died April 24, 2022. He was captured while serving in the Pacific Theatre during WWII and spent his captivity in Japan. Ray was a strong advocate for POWs, working with local veterans service organizations near home. He leaves his beloved wife of 70 years, Helen, 3 sons, 1 daughter, 7 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren and many other relatives and friends.

WATTERS, JACK HENRY, of Tucson, AZ passed away May 9, 2022. He was 97. During WWII, he served in the Army – 106th Inf. Div; he was captured in the Battle of the Bulge and held until liberation. Jack's wife, Dot, predeceased him; he is survived by 2 sons, 7 grandchildren, 10 great-grandchildren and their families.

---

In loving memory  
Your presence we miss...  
Your memory we treasure  
Loving you always...Forgetting you never



While in Stalag XVII-B near Krems, Austria, POW Roy Butler passed the time and amused his fellow prisoners by drawing cartoons of life in the camp.

Some former Stalag XVII-B POWs still have those cartons in their Wartime Log Books.

Thanks to artist Roy Butler for sharing the cartoon "Memories".

## Chaplain



Keith Lewis  
2205 Overbrook Drive  
Jasper, AL 35504  
(205)275-9035  
zpadre@icloud.com

I was very moved by the video "We're All Jews". It was about World War II POW'S in Germany.

The video is 14:23 minutes long and very worthwhile watching. <https://player.vimeo.com/video/198357872>) Hopefully you can view this video.

In the video, we get a glimpse of the bravery on the part of all the POW'S in one camp. It took a lot of internal fortitude to stand up to the camp officials resisting their orders, not only the leaders but all of them.

Standing together can give everyone involved a unified strength. At approximately 07:50 of the video there is a combined effort to resist the authorities that encouraged and enabled the whole camp to be liberated.

In our lives as we stand together, we do better than one person

alone. We are in tough times right now. As we get older things are just naturally harder. We need the strength and confidence of family, friends and the higher being - we gain strength in community.

I only survived because of several miracles that came from my GOD – ejecting just under the speed of sound, the enemy shooting at me as I was coming down in the parachute, etc.

When I got together with other POW'S things got better. We were able to give each other encouragement, and support plus sharing stories and news. We all need to be prepared for things to come and to support each other.

Prayerfully,  
Keith H. Lewis+

# AMERICAN EX-PRISONERS OF WAR VOLUNTARY FUNDING PROGRAM

The AXPOW Voluntary Giving Program parallels that of other VSOs, whereby the entire membership, including life members, is given the opportunity to contribute to the operation of our organization, based on ability and willingness to contribute. All contributions are to be sent directly to National Headquarters to be used for the operation of the organization. A complete accounting of contributors will appear in the Bulletin each issue.

I am enclosing my contribution to support the operation of the American Ex-Prisoners of War.

\$20.00                      \$30.00                      \$40.00                      \$50.00                      \$100.00                      Other

Name  
Address  
City/State/Zip  
Phone #

Please make checks payable to American Ex-Prisoners of War - Voluntary Funding  
Mail contributions to: National Headquarters, American Ex-Prisoners of War  
PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445



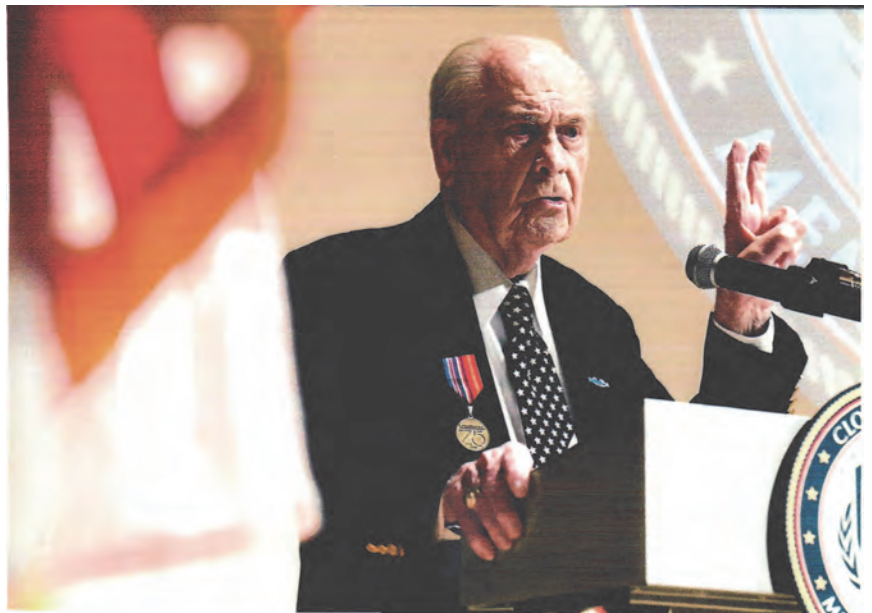
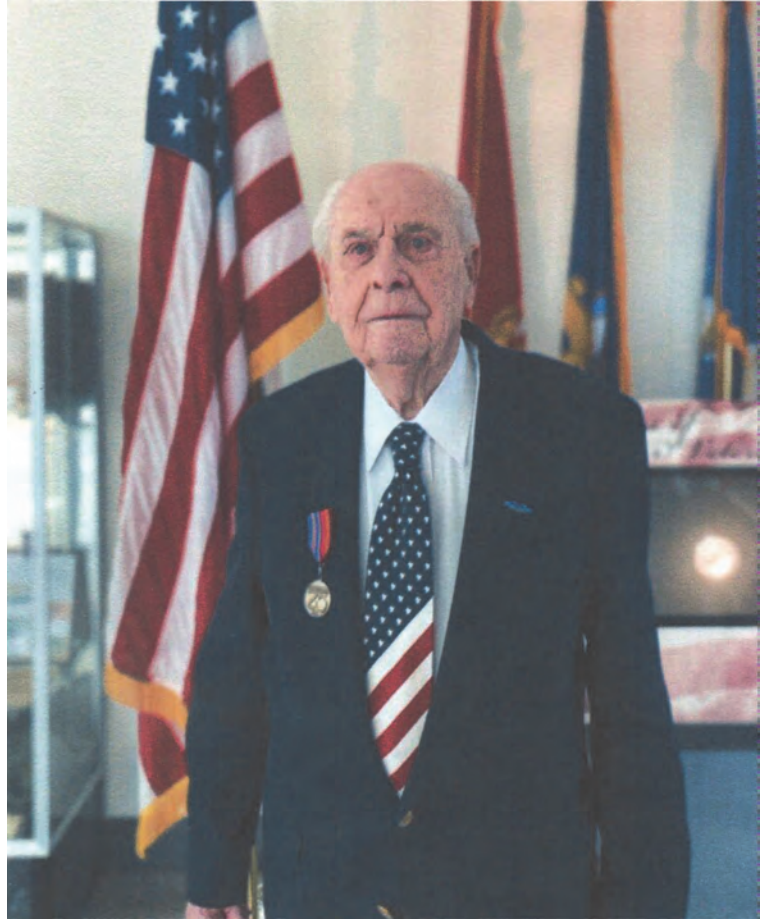
JEFFERSON BARRACKS POW-MIA MUSEUM  
JEFFERSON BARRACKS POW-MIA MUSEUM

*N is for Never Forget* is a child-friendly book that takes readers on a compelling journey through wartime history. Poignant illustrations and stories capture key people, concepts, and memorials to help readers understand and honor the sacrifices endured by men and women prisoners of war and missing in action on behalf of freedom.

Proceeds from books purchased through JBPM, Inc. (501c3) go directly to restoring \ renovating the former 1896 Officers Quarters Building into the Jefferson Barracks POW-MIA Museum. \$21.95 including S/H. Contact Paul Dillon at [rpdcw@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rpdcw@sbcglobal.net); 314-609-9037.



AXPOW Life Member and Fresno Chapter #1 Commander Vernon Schmidt of Fresno, California was presented the Honorary Commemorative Medal for his service in liberating Czechoslovakia in May 1945 and Holocaust survivors from the Flossenburg concentration camp. Czechoslovakia Army Colonel Jindrich Hacker presented the medal during a ceremony March 10, 2022 at the Clovis Veterans Memorial District. Vernon's brother, Glenn E. Schmidt, was a POW during WWII in the European Theatre.







Challenge Coins

\$13.00 includes S/H/I



Bronze Grave Medallions

\$100.00 includes S/H/I

All orders for products sold by AXPOW, including dues/subscriptions should be mailed to: American Ex-Prisoners of War, National Headquarters, PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445; [axpow76010@yahoo.com](mailto:axpow76010@yahoo.com)

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

Include your mailing label for address change or inquiry. If you are receiving duplicate copies, please send both labels. If moving, please give us your new address in the space below.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please allow 4 weeks to make address changes.

Mail to: National Headquarters, AXPOW, PO Box 3445, Arlington, TX 76007-3445. Email: [HQ@axpow.org](mailto:HQ@axpow.org)